

1487. aaa. 13.

DONCASTER RACES;
OR THE
HISTORY OF MISS MAITLAND;
A TALE OF TRUTH;
IN A SERIES OF LETTERS,
PUBLISHED FROM THE ORIGINALS,
WITH INTERESTING ADDITIONS,

By ALEX. BICKNELL,

AUTHOR OF THE HISTORY OF LADY ANNE NEVILLE;
ISABELLA, OR THE REWARDS OF GOOD NATURE;
THE PATRIOT KING, A TRAGEDY; &c. &c. &c.

AND EDITOR OF
MRS. BELLAMY'S APOLOGY, CAPTAIN CARVER'S
TRAVERS, &c. &c.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

Ne'er faithful woman felt, or false one feign'd,
A purer flame than in her bosom reign'd.

PRIOR'S HENRY AND EMMA,

V O L. II.

L O N D O N :
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DONCASTER RACES;

HISTORY OF MISS MAITLAND.

L E T T E R XLV.

MR. ACRES TO MR. THOMAS SCORER.

Hareland Hall, Sept. 1, 1779.

DEAR TOM,

I Have been again to —, and find that this sneaking kind of courtship won't do.—Nothing is to be made out there at present; and it does not suit with my temper to stand shilly shally any longer.—She tells me she can't be mine.—But by G—d she shall, Tom, by

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B

hook

hook or by crook.—The oftener I see her, the fiercer does my love burn for her.—So I am resolved to make her happy in spite of her teeth.—As she won't accept of the handsome offer I made her, why e'en let her take the consequences.—She shall see what a man of my resolution and fortune is able to do.

I have partly laid the plan with landlord,—and next Sunday evening is the time fixed for carrying it into execution. So, Tom, hold thyself in readiness to attend me then.—But be sure be as secret as the grave.—Landlord says 'twill be very easy to 'tice her into a postchaise, which he will send for her, with a message from a dear friend of hers, a Miss Lascelles, who shall be dying, and desire her to set out with all speed. He says, he knows Miss Burrell has so great a regard for that young lady, that in her fright she will ask but few questions.

He

He will pick out a trusty fellow for the purpose from among his drivers; and as Miss Lascelles lives about ten miles from —, nearly on the London road, it will be easy to get her on a considerable way before she entertains any suspicion. As the message is to be delivered about dusk, and as relays of horses are to be provided, we shall be able to make some progress in our journey to town before morning.

The rest I will tell thee when I see thee. Be here Saturday night, or Sunday morning early, as I propose setting off in the afternoon to a convenient place upon the road, where we are to wait the coming up of the chaise.

Be secret—and be resolute. At the same time fear nothing; for I will bear thee harmless from all damages, and handsomely reward thee if we are successful; which I doubt not but we shall be. I have told thy brother landlord

the same; and besides have taken care to grease the wheels;—thou understandst me?

But what has a man of three thousand a year to apprehend, Tom, from carrying off a girl, who, though she is of a good family, has neither money nor friends, as one may say?—If we should chance to be blowed up, it will only be considered as a frolick of a young fellow of fortune.—I have heard of such things being often done by lords; and I look upon myself as good as the best lord in the land.

I can't help laughing to think how the poor bird will flutter when she finds herself inclosed in our net. But it won't be long before she's used to the trammel.—

So no more at present,

From thy friend,

W. ACRES.

LETTER

LETTER XLVI.

MR. WINDHAM TO CHARLES CLAYTON,
ESQUIRE.

London, Sept. 3, 1779.

DEAR CHARLES,

THOUGH, from an attention to other points, I did not take any notice in my last of thy humorous account of the apparition, which obtruded itself upon thee, as often as you went through the avenue leading to Belle-farm, I must not let it pass unnoticed in this, lest my silence should seem to say, that I did not fully enter into the implication of it.—How ready are we, Charles, to find or invent an excuse for not doing what it behoves us to do, if the doing thereof does not accord with our wishes!

B 3

There

There was no need of thy conjuring up a ghost, and placing it in the way, to convince me that thy visits to the residence of Miss Maitland, since the alteration in thy sentiments with regard to that lady, were made with reluctance. That thy heart was elsewhere at the time, I plainly saw, notwithstanding thy boast of conforming to thy mother's wishes, and so forth.

But would it not have been more in character, think ye, Charles, hadst thou, like a pious soul, supposed the *devil* to have planted himself there?—A spectre with such a brilliant pair of eyes, and so fine a complexion, could have nothing intimidating in its appearance;—it would rather induce *me* to ride twenty miles to see it, than to avoid it. Besides, if it was such an exact representation of a lady for whom thou dost entertain so lively and fervent an affection, one would think, that the bare expectation

tation of seeing even that resemblance of the forbidden original, would tempt thee to go that way the oftener!—So the next time thou hast a mind to amuse me with a sportive fally of thy imagination, let it be a little more applicable, and to the purpose.

However, though I thus criticise thy metaphor, I readily understand the intent of it; and were it not that it might tend to draw thee from thy duty, and instigate thee to a revolt against the lady to whom thou hast so lately renewed thy homage, I would add, that I thought thee a man of too much spirit to be guilty of such dissimulation.

But to proceed with my description of Egypt,—Rosetta, which I purposed to give some account of next, lies to the north-east of Alexandria, and is situated upon the western branch of the Nile, near the place where it empties itself into the Mediterranean sea. At this port,

8 DONCASTER RACES.

the commerce which is carried on between Alexandria and Grand Cairo centers.

Rosetta exceeds in beauty and convenience most of the towns in Egypt. The houses are so situated as to enjoy a delightful view of the Nile, and of the Delta. And as the river is continually covered with boats, sailing or rowing in different directions; a chearful scene constantly exhibits itself to the inhabitants.

But what engaged my attention most, was the gardens which lie to the north of the town. Orange, lemon, date, and sycamore trees, grow there in a wild profusion; and intermingling their branches, always covered with flowers, form an exquisitely cool retreat from the heat, which, at some seasons, is excessive.

To these gardens the young Georgian girls, of which there are great numbers in Egypt, retire; and being consti-

constitutionally amorous, the warmth of the climate adds fuel to the fire. They, of course, seize the opportunity afforded them by the secret retirements here to be found, to give loose to the natural propensities of their hearts. You will be able to form a better judgment of these indulgences, when I come to give you an account of the dancing girls.

By the assistance of a Turkish dress, I obtained admission into these pleasant gardens; and—let me whisper to thee—had the happiness to be initiated, not indeed into the Elusinean mysteries, so famed of old, but into such as I am certain must far exceed them;—the mysterious rites of the groves of Rosetta.

I assure thee, Charles, that these gardens, according to my ideas, must come as near to Paradise, as any place of terrestrial origin can.—With this additional

B 5

charm

charm; that a man is not confined, as the inhabitant of Eden was, to one fair companion;—which, let me tell thee, must be rather irksome, were she ever so beautiful. On the contrary, he has here an abundant variety to pick and chuse out of; and most of these as comely and inviting, as the mother of mankind is represented by Milton to be.

Upon the eastern branch of the Nile, about two or three leagues from the mouth of it, lies the port of Damietta, a town considerably larger than Rosetta. It is built in the form of a crescent, and is very populous, containing upwards of seventy thousand inhabitants. The port is filled with an amazing number of small vessels and boats. Some of these are employed in conveying merchandize on board the ships in the road, they being prevented by a bar from coming nearer to the town; and others in the coasting trade.

A very

A very considerable commerce is carried on from hence with the Island of Cyprus, with Syria, and even so far as Marseilles in France. The articles exported are linens, sal almoniac, and particularly rice; that cultivated on the adjacent plains being of the choicest quality in all Egypt.

The country around Damietta is more fertile, and not less beautiful, than almost any other part. In the vicinity of the town are gardens, equally as delightful and retired as those of Rosetta, just described to thee. Nor does Diana ever meet with greater homage in them than in those of the former. Venus is the only deity, I assure thee, to whom an altar is ever raised there, and her fires are as unremittingly burning, as those of the vestals were at Rome.

In this part of the Delta, likewise, there is a constant succession of flowers and fruits. There is likewise no inter-

mission of their harvests. The climate is so remarkably temperate, that it appears to be even a more desirable place for a stranger to reside in, than Rosetta. The papyrus, of which the Egyptians anciently made their paper, grows here in great abundance; as does the reed calamus, which the orientals still use for writing.

This place is rendered famous from its having been besieged and carried by the Christian Princes, during their crusades, and afterwards by Saint Lewis, King of France.

Not far from Damietta is the ancient port of Pelusian; where the famous Roman General, Pompey, met his death. This great man having been defeated by Julius Cæsar, in the famous battle of Pharsalia, he sought a refuge here.—But he had scarcely landed, than he was stabbed by Achillas, the eunuch, who commanded his troops, assisted by
some

some others. These treacherous assassins, in order to procure more favourable terms for themselves, cut off Pompey's head, and presented it to Cæsar. His body was saved from dishonour by the grateful duty of Philip, his freedman, who, under favour of the night, reduced the remains of his master to ashes, with the wreck of a boat he found upon the sea shore.

Before the discovery of a passage to the East Indies by the Cape of Good Hope, Grand Cairo was one of the richest and most flourishing cities in the universe. It was the central mart for merchandise between Asia and Europe. Since it has been under the dominion of the Turks, its glory has greatly faded. It is, however, at this time, possessed of immense riches, and almost innumerable inhabitants. Its situation, and the fertility of the country around

it, must always preserve to it, a very considerable share of consequence among the Egyptian cities.

Grand Cairo is situated upon the banks of the canal of the *Prince of the Faithful*, and at some distance from the river Nile, on the east side of it. Its circumference is about three leagues, and it contains an immense number of houses, the streets being very narrow, and so crowded, that it is with difficulty you can, at any part of the day, pass through them. When you are told that the plague has been known to carry off, during its ravages, three hundred thousand of the inhabitants, you will be able to form some idea of its populousness.

A great number of temples are dispersed throughout the city, some of which appear like citadels. There are upwards of three hundred mosques in it; upon most of which are very high steeples

steeple of a light structure, and with galleries around them. These steeples are called minarets.

They have a custom here which struck me much. The sound of bells being abhorred by the followers of Mahomet, they do not admit them, as Christians do, into their towers. Instead of these, the people are summoned to the public exercise of their religious duties, at the appointed hours, by a great number of cryers, who are stationed upon the minarets. So that, to the inexpressible astonishment of a foreigner, seven or eight hundred voices are heard at the same instant conveying the summons.— This hallabaloo, (as an Hibernian would term it,) is repeated five times a day; namely, at sun-rise, at noon, at three o'clock, at sun-set, and about two hours after. And as the formula made use of upon the occasion has something singular in it, I will give it thee. It consists

lists of the following pithy sentences :
*God is great. I declare that there is only
one God. I aver that Mabomet is his pro-
phet. Come to prayer ; come to adoration.
God is great, He is the only one.*

But let us descend from this elevation. Though the present city of Cairo is not to be reckoned among the ancient cities of Egypt, it not having been founded till about the 350th year of the Hegyra, that is about the 950th year of the Christian æra ; there are many remains of grandeur to be seen, in the marble columns that are still standing, and the domes which lie amidst heaps of rubbish.

The country around Cairo is fertile and rich ; it is constantly covered with the productions of Ceres, interspersed with groves of date trees. From the upper part of the city there is a beautiful and extensive prospect, which is terminated by those enormous masses
of

of stone, the pyramids; whose summits, like the tops of high mountains, seem to be lost in the clouds. When the land is overflowed by the Nile, the different hamlets, which are all situated upon spots elevated above the common level, become islands; and have a very pleasing effect.

At the distance of about half a league from Cairo, situated on the banks of the Nile, there is a town named Boulac, which serves as a port to that city. It is here that the merchandise from Damietta and Alexandria is landed. The town is about two miles in length, extending along the side of the river; but of no great breadth.

There is little in the place itself to attract attention, except its magnificent baths, and its vast warehouses, where strangers deposit their merchandise. But the view from almost every house in it, is beyond description striking. From
them

them you see an amazing number of boats passing and repassing, or lying at anchor. Some of these are designed for voyages of pleasure, and have handsome apartments in them, which are decorated with carved work and painting. Others are appropriated to the conveyance of merchandize. And others, of a lighter construction, to carrying people from one shore to another. Indeed whatever part of the Nile you are upon, you find it covered nearly in this manner.

When we were at Grand Cairo, you may be assured, we did not fail to visit that venerable and, I believe, only remaining wonder of the world, the pyramids. They are situated about four leagues to the south-west of that city, on the opposite side of the river.

As these enormous masses of stone have been already described by so many writers, I shall not enter into a minute description of them.—We ascended to
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the top of the largest.—The form you well know. It is composed of about two hundred layers of stone, which grow less and less; decreasing in depth from four to two feet. The prospect from the summit is rich and extensive beyond expression. When you stand close to the foot of the pyramid, and view it from thence, it appears as if formed of huge masses of rocks. Retire to the distance of a few score paces, the stones seem comparatively small. So immense is the whole fabric. According to Pliny, it covers eight acres of ground.

Writers, both ancient and modern, disagree about the height of the largest pyramid. The nearest calculation seems to be 550 English feet. From the accounts given by the earliest historians of its height in their time, it must have been considerably diminished since,
through

through the increase of the sand around it. There is every reason to believe that the outside of it was anciently coated with marble; splinters still remaining thereon.

The body of the king that built it, who is supposed to be one of the Pharaohs, was deposited in the centre of this superb mausoleum. But even this almost impenetrable recess has not been able to secure it from violation: A passage has been opened, with infinite labour, into the middle of the pyramid. This was done about the beginning of the eighth century, by order of Mahmoud, one of the Arabian Caliphs, under whose jurisdiction Egypt then was. The sarcophagus, which contained the royal remains, is empty; and if there was any treasure buried with him, it has been carried off.

Not

Not far from the foregoing pyramid is a second, the dimensions of which are not much inferior to it. And to the east of this is a third, which, when compared with the other two, appears very diminutive. It is, however, said to be three hundred feet square. Three small pyramids, now in ruins, encompass the latter, which are supposed to have been tombs for the consorts of those sovereigns who erected the three large ones.

Several eminent writers have given it as their opinion that the pyramids and obelisks of this country, which to common travellers appeared to be buildings merely of ornament and magnificence, were really sun-dials, upon a larger scale, by which the variation of the length of the shadow in proportion to its height could be taken with a greater degree of accuracy.

It has been found upon examination, that the two sides, both of the larger
and

and smaller pyramids, are placed exactly north and south, so as to be true meridian lines even at this day; and consequently, that the other two sides, stood due east and west. They were most probably placed in this direction for the purpose of their astronomical observations; as the only method they then had for determining the situation of places, or their distance from the equator, was by remarking the length of their longest and shortest day.

That this observation might be performed with some accuracy, they made use of a species of perpendicular sun-dials, having a *stilus* or *gnomen* erected upon a horizontal plane, by which they were enabled to measure the length or shortness of the shadow, in proportion to the height of the *stilus*. The propensity of the Egyptians to the study of astronomy, might therefore have induced them, at the time they were erecting these mausolea

solea for their kings, to attend to this point also, and by placing them in a proper direction, to render them, at once, works both of magnificence and utility.

Not far from the second pyramid, is the figure of a sphynx, cut out of the rock on which the pyramids stand. It is nearly covered by the sand; and tho' a small part of the back only is visible, even that is upwards of one hundred feet long. By this you will be able to form some judgment of the vastness of its size.

I must not here forget to mention, that to this spot it is supposed the Greeks owed their religious system relative to the future existence of the soul. Adjacent to the pyramids, there were anciently temples, and great numbers of priests belonging to them, whose business it was to offer up sacrifices, and to pray for the dead.

Here

Here the inhabitants of Memphis used likewise to bury their dead. In order to do this, they were obliged to pass over some intervening lakes. It then, also, was a custom among the Egyptians to make a public examination into the conduct of the deceased, while living, and to pass judgment accordingly upon their memory.

These circumstances being noticed by Orpheus and such others of the Greeks as, during the earliest stages of the emersion of their own country from barbarism, visited Egypt; it suggested to them the fable of Charon, of Minos, Rhadamanthus, &c. And some verdant plains, lying beyond those vast tracks of sand, by which Egypt is skirted towards the west, gave rise to their doctrine of the Elysian fields, &c.—To such inconsiderable circumstances were that wise and mighty people, the Greeks, and after them the Romans, indebted for
their

their system of religion ; and their poets for a great part of that beautiful imagery, which has tended to render their works immortal.

Though we did not proceed any higher up the Nile than the spot where the pyramids stand, I must just notice the present state of two places in Upper Egypt which you have often read of, and which were once much more celebrated than any of those I have already mentioned ; I mean the cities of Memphis and Thebes.

The former, anciently the capital of Egypt, was upwards of seven leagues in circumference, and abounded with magnificent temples and palaces. This abode of kings has been stript by time of all her honours, and is now reduced to an inconsiderable town, which still retains something of the name, being called *Memf.*

Thebes, celebrated by Homer, and other writers among the ancients, for

her hundred gates, and the grandeur of her buildings, is nearly in the same situation. She has not been able to escape the ravages of age, and of barbarous conquerors. There are, however, remaining, as I was informed, many vestiges of its former magnificence, particularly two majestick obelisks, at least seventy feet high, and about thirty in circumference. They are each of them composed of one block of granite, and covered with hieroglyphics, curiously sculptured.

Among the ruins of Thebes is the famous vocal statue of Memnon. This likewise is in an imperfect condition, having been broken off in the middle, by order of Cambyfes. The lower half only remains upon its base. It was formed of granite. And you may be able to form some idea of the colossal size of it, when you are told that its foot measures near eleven feet.

This

This statue is said to have uttered somewhat like an articulate sound, every morning when the sun darts its first rays upon it. That such a sound was by some means or other emitted from it at that moment, is testified by a great number of respectable witnesses both Greeks and Romans, who have engraven their testimony, signed with their names, upon the part that remains. When perfect, it represented a young man of the finest form, in the flower of his age. Homer calls him the son of Aurora; and in his *Odysssey* speaks of him by the name of the *divine* Memnon, the handsomest of mortals.

You have heard, I doubt not, of a city in Upper Egypt, which the Emperor Trajan caused to be built in honour of his favourite Antinous, and called by his name. It still, I find, retains the name of *Antinoe*, and exhibits some remains of its former magnificence.

From the statues yet existing of this young man, he must have been extremely handsome ; but is it not strange, that a prince, possessed of so many virtues as Adrian was, should give such a public proof of his shameful partiality?

The heats in the *Said*, or Upper Egypt, are sometimes extreme ; particularly when the south wind blows. The proximity of the *Delta*, or Lower Egypt, to the sea, and the lakes, rivers, and canals with which it abounds, renders the air of that much more temperate.

As the Nile pervades both these divisions, it may be needful here to give you a short account of it. This river, so celebrated for its annual inundation, takes its rise in the southern parts of Africa, and running through the whole extent of Egypt, empties itself, at several mouths, into the Mediterranean sea.

The annual inundation takes place in the summer. The waters begin to rise
a little

a little before the solstice, and continues to do so till towards the middle of August. During this period it fills the canals, and lakes, which are then nearly exhausted; and overflowing the land, leaves behind it a fruitful manure, that causes the fertility for which this country has long been, and still continues to be famous.

As soon as the river has attained a certain height, the event is celebrated at Grand Cairo with great rejoicings. An universal gladness reigns; and the inhabitants congratulate each other on the prospect of abundance. The water of the Nile is remarkably sweet and light, and more agreeable to the palate than that of most other rivers.

As the Nile is considered by the Egyptians as the great source of the fertility of their country, and all the consequent advantages, they anciently ranked it among their gods. At first

they gave him the name of *Jaro*, the river; but when they had observed his annual rise, they distinguished him by the epithet of *Neilon*, which means *one who grows in a stated time*. He had his priests, festivals, and sacrifices; and they likewise built a city in honour of him.

The Nile is known to abound with crocodiles. This amphibious creature is almost peculiar to it; and spreads universal terror through all the places which lie adjacent to the river. The inhabitants of a town in Upper Egypt are, however, exempt from this apprehension. While every other part of the country is terrified at the approach of this ravenous animal, and it was anciently worshipped through fear, they seek it out, and, swimming to meet it, boldly combat it. And though the attack is attended with great danger, it is seldom but what they prove victorious.

victorious. The method they pursue is this : They thrust a plank of fir between his jaws, as they are extended to devour them ; and the nature of the wood being soft, the teeth of the crocodile stick so firmly in it, that he is easily drawn to the shore, by a cord previously fastened to the plank, and destroyed.

Egypt was rendered as famous, in the earlier ages, by its agriculture as by its commerce. And for this were they in a great measure indebted to the immense works they raised, in order to distribute the fertilising waters of the Nile throughout the whole extent of their empire. Most of these works have fallen to decay, or have been choaked up. There remain, however, at this time, a considerable number of canals, many of which are from twenty to forty leagues in length. Notwithstanding which, nearly one-third of the lands

formerly in cultivation are become deserts.

The population of this country seems to have decreased in proportion. The ancient historians, who have written of this kingdom, tell us, that it furnished subsistence for eight millions of inhabitants, besides supplying Italy and the neighbouring provinces with provisions. They likewise tell us that there were twenty thousand *cities* in it, during the reigns of the latter Pharoahs. At this time the country is reduced in all points, by the destructive state of its government, and the exactions of the Beys, to a much narrower compass. When I tell you the soil is so rich that some crops produce eighty fold, and, as already observed, that there is a constant progression of seed time and harvest, the ground not needing any relaxation, as it does in our northern climes, you will naturally suppose that Egypt will always

ways retain a degree of respectability for its agriculture and commerce among the neighbouring nations.

I have noted in my common place book the various produce of the country; but as the observations relative to other points, which I have as yet to transcribe, will fill several letters more, I forbear enumerating them, and beg leave to refer you for them to the publications before-mentioned.

Before I close this letter, I will give you some account of the ancient and modern inhabitants of this country. The true natives of Egypt are the *Coptis*. These are the only descendants of the original people. Though, from being subjected for many ages to foreign princes, the *Coptis* have lost the genius and sciences of their predecessors, they have preserved, with the vulgar language, many of their customs and habits. They became Christians in the

earliest stages of the promulgation of that religion; but they mix with their worship a great number of superstitious customs. They have many churches at Grand Cairo, with priests and bishops, over whom there is a patriarch. Notwithstanding their ignorance, as to their religious tenets, this people are possessed of many good qualities; they are gentle, humane and hospitable.

The *Arabs* are the next ancient people of Egypt. Of these nearly two-thirds of the present inhabitants are composed. But they do not come near the *Copts* in the placidity of their temper, and the goodness of their disposition. On the contrary, they are implacable in their resentment, and readily entering into the quarrels of those who rule over them, rise up against each other, and spread desolation around them.

Another branch of the Arab natives are chiefly employed in cultivation, and
are

are in their dispositions nearly the reverse of the former. They are governed by their *Scheiks*, or old men, and being ignorant of the vices of the world, are harmless and inoffensive. With regard to hospitality, they carry their ideas to a height that excites admiration, and deserves the highest praise.

The third species of Arabs are termed *Bedaoui*; inhabitants of the desert. These reside in the burning solitudes which extend to the East and West of Egypt, and are employed in the care of their cattle. Like the hords of Tartars, they are continually removing from place to place in quest of fresh pasturage. But this is not the only way by which they procure a subsistence. They attack the caravans that pass near them, and if they prove successful, carry off all the plunder they can. They seldom, however, kill, unless to avenge the death of their companions. Amidst this thirst for plunder,

C 6

they

they exceed in nobleness of sentiment almost every other nation upon the earth. They never violate their plighted faith. Put yourself under the protection of an Arab, and your life and your property are as secure as in the hands of your firmest friends. They likewise hold the rights of hospitality in as high esteem as the foregoing tribe.

Inheriting the spirit of their primogenitor, Ishmael, they prefer the liberty they enjoy among their deserts, to the fertile plains of Egypt with dependence. Treachery and perjury are unknown among them. And in a situation so congenial to friendship and love, they are not strangers to these amiable passions. This may be known from their sonnets and poems, in which there is a delicacy and ardour that would do credit to a more polished people.

I need

I need not inform you that the great prophet Mahomet sprung from this race of Arabs; and with his armies, composed of these people, subdued and planted his religion, throughout a great part of Asia and Africa. They consequently profess the Mahometan faith.

Besides the Coptis and the Arabs, there is another tribe which composes a part of the republic of Egypt; and that is the *Mograbians* or Western Mahometans. Some of these dedicate themselves to commerce, others to a military life. Those who engage in the latter profession, being void of all principle but that of self interest, unite themselves to the most wealthy Bey, and seize, without hesitation, every opportunity, even the most unjustifiable, of making their fortunes.

Though Egypt is held in subjection by the *Turks*, that people constitute but a very

a very small part of the community. The Janizaries, and other corps of soldiers, are composed of Turks, who, like the Mograbians, employ every method, however oppressive and dishonest, to amass fortunes.

The Egyptians are by no means of a warlike disposition, and as little skilled in the use of arms. Were they more so they would not suffer themselves to be governed and pundered by a band of foreigners, amounting in the whole to not more than eight or ten thousand men.

Old age is esteemed more honourable in Egypt than it is in any part of Europe. The head of a family, like the patriarchs of old, is at once the judge and the high priest of it. The greater the length of days a man here attains, the greater the veneration he is beheld with. At all their public assemblies he enjoys the precedence, and is every where

where treated with respect. When he dies, his descendants pay equal respect to his memory. They bedew his body with their tears; and resorting frequently to his tomb, they strew flowers over it, and repeat funeral hymns.

Having thus given you some idea of the country and its inhabitants, I will here conclude; and proceed in my next to the customs, manners, government, religion, &c. of the Egyptians; a part much more pleasing to me, and which, I flatter myself, will prove more entertaining to you.—Till then, Charles, adieu.—

J. N. WINDHAM.

LETTER

LETTER XLVII.

MISS MAITLAND TO MRS. SELWYN.

*Belle Farm, Monday morning,
September 6, 1779.*

TOO true, Eliza, were my forebodings ;—they have been fatally confirmed.—I am not to be happy with Clayton.—An accident has happened that will probably counteract all the purposed plans for our re-union. We have this moment received intelligence that Clayton is brought home dangerously, if not mortally wounded.—I fly to comfort and assist him.—Some young lady, I find, rescued from the hands of ruffians.—Perhaps Miss Burrell.—Be it so ;—not even her presence shall prevent my attendance on him, in so alarming an hour.—No—I obey the calls of love,
and

and hasten to him on the wings of distraction and impatience.—I knew not, till now, how much I loved thee, Clayton!—Adieu, Eliza, pray for and pity

Your wretched friend,

HARRIET MAITLAND.

P. S. Your servant being here, I have scrawled these few lines, just to let you know our situation.

LETTER XLVIII.

MISS MAITLAND TO MRS. SELWYN.

Woodland Cat, Monday afternoon,

Sept. 6, 1779.

WHAT a wretched being, my dear Eliza, at this moment, is your Harriet!—How sad the reverse which has taken place in my happiness within these few months past!—Blest with your friendship

friendship, and Clayton's love, not long ago I defied the utmost malice of Fortune.—Now, alas! such is the vicissitude incident to human nature, I am become a prey to despair.

Having retired from Clayton's room, in order that he might, if possible, get some repose, I will endeavour, Eliza, to give you a few circumstances of the accident which has been the means of reducing me to this situation.

It was, as my prophetic mind told me, Miss Burrell, in whose defence Clayton received his wounds.—I had almost said, with a petulance I would not wish to indulge, in the defence of one, who is born, I fear, to be the bane of my happiness.—Having refused the hand of a young fellow of considerable fortune, but of loose principles, whose name is Acres, he, by some stratagem or other, got her into his power; and was carrying her off towards London, when they were acci-

accidentally met by Clayton, who happened to be out that morning, very early, with his gun.—Alarmed at her cries, he flew to her assistance;—but being overpowered in the conflict, he was knocked down, and severely wounded.—The rescue of the young lady was, however, completed by some peasants who were near, and her ravishers having made off, she attended the bleeding body of her champion to Woodland Cot.

When my father and myself, in obedience to our hasty summons, got there, we found such a scene of distraction and confusion, as I shall not attempt to describe.—And this was not lessened when Clayton's wounds underwent an examination by the surgeons.—Not a ray of consolation was to be collected, either from their looks or their words—They shook their heads, but forbore to give a decisive opinion. In this state have I left him.

Ah.

Ah, Eliza!—I do not wonder at Clayton's infidelity!—I rather pity than blame him; and have only to regret the hour that threw my rival in his way.—Miss Burrell is indeed pretty—Pretty, did I say! She is exceedingly handsome.—But while I acknowledge this to you, Eliza, I cannot help observing, that even in the present distracted state of things here, she cannot divest herself of the appearance of too great a consciousness of that superiority.

This would perhaps give offence to any other person; but impressed with a due sense of my own inferiority, and making every allowance for the temptation Clayton had to combat, I behave towards her with that unreserved civility, her being a stranger, and the beloved of *my* beloved, entitles her to.

But why do I bestow a thought upon any thing but Clayton's situation!—Let him but *live*, and I ask no more.—

Let

Let him but live, and I think I could, with composure, see him lead her to the altar.

The surgeons are to be here again this evening; I shall then know my doom.—Should my apprehensions be realized, believe me, Eliza, distraction or death will follow.—My love for Clayton is not of the common sort.

Forty thousand *Burrells*
 Could not with all their quantity of love
 Make up my sum——

My heart is too full to proceed.—
 To-morrow I will write again.—Heaven grant that these tormenting fears may not be supplanted by a more dreadful certainty.—Oh, Eliza! once more let me beg the most fervent oraisons your sympathising heart can dictate, for

Your much-distressed friend,

HARRIET MAITLAND.

LETTER

LETTER XLIX.

MISS BURRELL TO MISS LASCELLES.

Woodland Cot, Sept. 6, 1788.

COULD my dear Anna have ever thought of receiving a letter from me, dated from the residence of Clayton's mother?—No, never, you answer.—Yet so it is, Anna.—Such is the will of fate.

But let me, in the first place, ask you, my ever dear friend, whether you are not very ill.—Had it not been for that supposition, I should not have been here. However, as consequent circumstances have proved, that the persons who gave me the information had some sinister purposes to answer by it, I will flatter myself that there is no truth in it.—And this, amidst the distressful scene in which

which I am obliged to participate, shall be my consolation.

A distressful scene indeed, am I obliged to be a partaker in here, my Anna. — The only man for whom I ever sighed has received, I fear, his death's wound in my service. — Alas, poor fellow! never more will he cause a jealous palpitation either in Miss Maitland's bosom or mine. — There is every probability, Anna, that Clayton, in a very short time, will be numbered among the dead. — As the surgeons have directed that he shall be kept very quiet, I have retired to another room; and, in order to pass the anxious moments away, I will endeavour to give you a succinct account of what, without further explanation, must appear mysterious to you.

Yesterday evening, about dusk, a post-chaise drove up to my cousin's door, and with it came the landlord of the Crown inn, in our town, who desired to
be

be permitted to speak with me. Upon my coming down, he told me, with an appearance of concern, that the driver of one of his chaises, which was just returned from ——, had brought a message from you, my Anna, informing me, that you lay at the point of death, through a sudden indisposition; and that you most earnestly wished to take a last leave of me.

Upon my asking if he had no letter for me, he replied that the family were in such a state of confusion, when the chaise passed by the door, that a verbal message could only be delivered; which it was hoped, in such an emergency, would answer the same purpose. — Alarmed to the greatest degree, I hurried on my cloak and bonnet, and without paying any attention to the intreaties of my cousin, who would have prevailed upon me to take a servant with me, I stepped into the chaise, which the
 - landlord

landlord had *prudently* provided, and away it drove like lightning.

Nothing material occurred for the first five or six miles, during which my mind was totally possessed by my apprehensions for my dearest Anna.—It was now nearly dark.—When, on a sudden, the chaise stopped, and I could perceive that it was surrounded by three or four horsemen. Supposing their design to be on my purse, I let down the window, and presented it to the person that was nearest; but what was my surprise, when I saw a lusty young fellow, to whom the others seemed to pay respect, dismount from his horse, and endeavour to enter the chaise! And my surprise was doubled when I found the intruder to be squire Acres, my last new lover. Enraged at my refusal of his offers, as I afterwards learnt, he had laid this plan to carry me off to London.

I was at first much alarmed ; but at length, I consoled myself with considering it as one of those adventures, which we so often read of in Novels ; and a frolick of this kind not being very displeasing to me, I resolved to let it have its course, till some new incident should, at the return of the day-light, set me free. As you know I have often experienced, that a frown of mine would instantly check any liberties from the most aspiring of my lovers, I was under no apprehensions on that head, though enveloped in the sable veil of night.

Soon after day-light appeared, we perceived a gentleman, with a fowling piece in his hand, coming along the road. As he was on my side of the chaise, I looked out, and who should it be, but my renegado lover, Clayton. Without scarcely knowing what I did, I let down the window, and gave an involuntary

voluntary shriek. The well-known voice instantly caught his ear; and naturally concluding that something was amiss, he flew, swift as an arrow, to the heads of the horses, telling the driver, that if he did not immediately stop, he would lodge the contents of his piece in his head.

The man being intimidated, stopped, notwithstanding the squire vociferously bawled out to him to go on.—In another moment Clayton was at the side of the chaise, and had pulled open the door; when, by the same involuntary impulse, I threw myself into his arms.

I had scarcely done so, before the squire's attendants, who had lagged a little behind, came up; and surrounding my rescuer, seemed only to wait for their principal's command, to fall upon him. This they instantly received, and with the heavy but-ends of their whips laid him prostrate on the ground,

D 2

before

before he could level his piece at them, which he was about to do. Terrified beyond expression, I now shrieked aloud. My cries brought from an adjacent wood three or four wood-cutters, with their axes in their hands, who no sooner appeared, than the squire and his companions turned up a road which was near, and went off.

The men took up the body of Clayton, who had been rendered insensible by the blows he had received, and conveyed it to Woodland Cot, which lay about half a mile from the place where the affray happened. I attended, on foot, the mournful procession, overwhelmed by a sorrow more poignant than I had ever before experienced ;— for I now found that the impression made by him on my heart, which I thought nearly erased, was far from being so.

I will

I will leave you to guess, Anna, at the distraction which ensued, upon our arrival at the house;—and likewise at the irksomeness of my situation amidst it, as being the cause.—Nothing but that elevation of mind for which, you know, I stand indebted to nature, and to the adulation of my lovers, could have supported me through it. Not but that I must do Clayton's mother and Miss Maitland (who you may be assured was one of the earliest visitors upon the melancholy occasion) the justice to say, that during the intervals of lamentation for a wounded son and lover, they behaved to me with as much civility as the situation of affairs would admit of.

I will, however, acknowledge to thee, my Anna, that the fervour of my rival's grief did not add to mine.—I cannot bear participation either in love, or in my sorrow for a beloved object. Had there been no one to lament him but

myself, my tears may perhaps have flowed with as warm a sincerity as her's. As it is, I cannot help owning that I find it abated by them.

But to return to poor Clayton.—What will be the consequence of his wounds is not yet to be ascertained.—The surgeons are reluctant to speak their sentiments. Their looks, however, seem to declare that they think their patient in great danger.—They are to be here again this evening, and on a second examination they may be able to speak with greater certainty.

As the post, I find, is just setting off, I will send this away, without waiting for their coming, lest you should have heard of my leaving home, and be apprehensive that a greater mischance has befallen your friend than happens to have been the case. I shall write, at the same time, a few lines to my cousin, to put a stop to her anxiety; as I cannot

cannot leave this place with any propriety, while Clayton remains in so perilous a state.

Though you are not naturally hard-hearted, Anna, I think I can conjecture what kind of a soliloquy will be dictated by your regard for my interest, upon your reading the foregoing detail. —For my own part, I am so *astounded*, as Milton says, at the varying incidents which have taken place since my first accidental meeting with Clayton, that I scarcely dare to indulge a wish; and shall leave every consequent event to the guidance of the God of Love, or whatever Being may have the direction of my fate.

Adieu, my dear Anna, and believe me to be

Yours sincerely,

ARABELLA BURRELL.

L E T T E R L.

MISS MAITLAND TO MRS. SELWYN.

Woodland Cot, Monday Night, 10 o'Clock.

SUCH a scene has just taken place, my dear Eliza, as has put the susceptibility of my heart to the severest test.—Love and jealousy have ruled in it by turns.—The former, thank Heaven, has proved predominant.—It is decreed, Eliza, that I must give up the hope I have cherished for so many years.—Clayton is not to be mine.—If death spares him, it is only to become the husband of my rival.—And yet, so superior is my love for him to my jealousy, that, even in this trying moment, my ejaculations to the great Disposer of events are, “Let him live!” —“Let my rival triumph!” —“Let me alone suffer!”

The

The surgeons returned about seven this evening to examine the wounds of their patient; and now made no hesitation to declare that they thought them extremely dangerous.—Clayton, who, from being kept quiet, had by this time perfectly recovered his reason, requested that their unreserved opinion might be made known to him; and received the fatal tidings without the least intimidation.

As soon as the physical gentlemen had withdrawn, he begged that Miss Burrell and myself would do him the favour to come to his bed side.—We drew near with a kind of solemn awe. Miss Burrell seemed to be really affected.—As for my own part, it is impossible for me to describe the agitation of my mind.

When we were within his reach, he took one of our hands in each of his, and in a feeble voice, addressed us near-

ly to the following purport.—“ I thank
“ you both, ladies, for the concern you
“ shew upon the present occasion : your
“ sensibility cannot but be grateful to
“ me.—Cease, however, your tears, nor
“ weep for an event that must prove a
“ release to me from an anxiety that
“ has for some time past made my life
“ a burthen to me.—In the first place,
“ let me beg your forgiveness, Miss
“ Maitland, for the declaration I am
“ about to make ;—my present situation
“ requires that I should be explicit.—
“ Till within these few months, you
“ held the chief place in my affections.
“ —I gloried in the partiality you was
“ pleased to shew towards me, and pro-
“ mised myself a fund of happiness
“ from our intended union.—But it is
“ otherwise ordered ; though it is not
“ in the power of chance or time to
“ diminish my esteem for you, acci-
“ dent has abated the fervour of desire.

“ — Once

“ —Once more, my dear Harriet, let
“ me implore your pardon for this
“ freedom; my unreservedness at any
“ other time, I own, might savour of
“ rudeness;—but the occasion will, I
“ hope, plead for me.—From the first
“ hour I saw Miss Burrell, she has
“ reigned sole mistress of my heart;
“ and notwithstanding I so far yielded
“ to the wishes of my mother and your
“ family, as to enter into my late con-
“ tract of probation, all my endeavours
“ to reconcile my mind to our re-union,
“ has proved ineffectual.”——He then
again begged my forgiveness;—imput-
ed his deviation to that destiny which
is not to be withstood;—and concluded
with saying, that, he should acknow-
ledge with his latest breath my worth.
—Then looking up in Miss Burrell’s
face, he said, “Shall I presume to hope,
“ my dear Miss Burrell, that the late
“ apparent suppression of my love, has

“not entirely obliterated those favourable ideas with which you once honoured me?—I will flatter myself that it has not; and in this last hour, probably of my life, consider you as my wife.”

Such a public avowal of his preference in favour of my rival, put, as I observed at the beginning of my letter, all the susceptibility of my heart to the test.—The struggles between love and jealousy were for a few minutes most violent.—At length, the former proved victorious, and at once impelled by the true affection I bore him, and alarmed at the dangerous state he lay in, I summoned up fortitude enough to tell him, that as I saw his happiness, which was far dearer to me than my own, could only be secured to him by an union with the lady by my side, I freely released him from every engagement to me, and enter-

entertained no other wish, than that of seeing him restored to health.

Though Miss Burrell made no reply to the latter part of Clayton's speech, her countenance did not seem to exhibit any marks of disapprobation.—

Affected, as any one would have been, at the solemnity of the scene, she shed tears;—but amidst my own perturbations, I could not help observing, that Clayton's public declaration in her favour,—my humiliation,—and her consequent triumph,—seemed to raise emotions in her mind, not altogether accordant with the drops which bedewed her cheeks.—(May I venture this observation to *you*, Eliza, without incurring the imputation of being actuated by pique and ill-will; which I assure you is not the case ?)

As for Clayton's mother, the fear of losing a beloved son, absorbed every other thought. — She begged him to
compose

compose his mind, and laying aside, for the present, all other considerations, strive only to preserve his valuable life; when he might be assured of being indulged in his wishes, even though they tended to annihilate some of her's, which she had long pleased herself with seeing the completion of.

Clayton appearing now to be exhausted with the interesting conversation, he lifted our unwithdrawn hands alternately to his lips, and then suffered us to retire. And as, after what had passed, bare complaisance, devoid of cordiality, could be the only cement to keep Mrs. Clayton, Miss Burrell, and myself together, we soon separated for the night.

Some particular business calling my father home, he went away early in the evening.—What the result will be, when he returns in the morning, and finds that so unexpected an alteration in
his

his plans has taken place, I will not pretend to say; but am apprehensive that he will not be able to keep his resentment within any bounds.

Clayton, I just hear, is more composed than when we left him, and seems inclined to sleep.—Could he but do so, it may probably give a favourable turn to his illness.—His having unburthened his mind has undoubtedly contributed to this composure; and sincerely do I rejoice at it, though it has been obtained at the expence of my happiness.

Would I could find *my* pillow to afford me the same relief!—But I much fear the softest down would not be able to lull the perplexities and apprehensions by which my mind is agitated.—I will however, try its efficacy, and bid my dear Eliza good night.

HARRIET MAITLAND.

LETTER

LETTER LI.

MISS BURRELL TO MISS LASCELLES.

Woodland Cot, Sept. 10, 1779.

HERE I am, as yet, my Anna; but purpose returning home to-morrow. And what do you think occasions my going so soon, when I am under a hospitable roof, and with the man by whom I am beloved?—Why, Anna, it is for nothing more nor less, than to prepare for a wedding.—A wedding quotha?—Aye, my dear girl, for the wedding of your good friend and humble servant, Arabella Burrell. As I may probably take your town in my way, I shall forbear for the present the whys and the wherefores, and no farther anticipate, than to tell you, by way of appendix to my last letter, that Clayton being apprehensive, from the
phizes

phizes of the surgeons that his case was desperate, publicly declared before his mother and my rival, that I reigned sole mistress of his heart.—So public a triumph over a formidable rival, who stood by, could not but give me pleasure, and obtain my consent to be his if he should live.—His mother's consent followed. — And his wounds turning out to be far less dangerous than the chirurgeons represented them to be, probably in order to enhance their own skill, he is getting well apace.—I am of course about to return, to make the needful preparations; for I cannot in honour, you know, refuse to perform a promise given on so solemn an occasion.

What say you to all this, Anna?—For my own part, I can only say, that so it is, and so it must be,—and so I will say no more, but that, whether virgin, wife, or widow, I shall ever be

Yours sincerely,

ARABELLA BURRELL.

LETTER LII.

MRS. SELWYN TO MISS MAITLAND.

—, Sept. 16, 1779.

MY DEAR HARRIET,

MR. Selwyn and myself have perused your late letters with the most friendly concern; and have felt no little uneasiness at the contents of them.—Your situation is indeed very critical; and your lot much harder than what is experienced by the generality of your sex.—May you be supported through your present trial by that Power who alone can afford support!—It is for wise purposes, I doubt not, though we are not able to comprehend them, that you are debarred from the enjoyment of a long-indulged hope—You may have an opportunity by it, of displaying, in a greater degree than you otherwise would have, that elevation of mind nature has endowed

endowed you with ;—and these exertions may be the means of rendering your name celebrated for disinterested love.

With regard to the lady who has thus supplanted you, envy not her success, nor be dejected at her temporary triumph.—Believe me, no permanent and rational happiness can be the result of a blind misguided passion on one side, and a kind of transient liking, which is easily kindled in light minds, on the other.—Mark the sequel, Harriet; and if it does not confirm these conjectures, I will give up all pretensions to a knowledge of human nature.

As the celebration of their nuptials may soon take place, (for, from what you write, no further deliberation seems to be required,) and as it cannot be at all agreeable for you to be within the sound of the bells which proclaim it, endeavour to obtain leave of your father, my dear Harriet, to spend a few weeks
with

with us. If through the warmth and obstinacy of his temper, he should wish you to stay and brave it out, and not fly the field; tell him, that we request it as a particular favour, and advise it as a prudential step; neither our requests or advice were wont to be rejected by him.

Here, Harriet, from the soothing consolation of two hearts set in union with your own, you may be able to find a balm that will tend to heal the wounds of disappointment.—It may be in the power of true friendship to lay a foundation for the re-establishment of your peace of mind, by pointing out some new track for your disappointed wishes to flow in.—It may be in our power to make you forget a man who has proved so capricious, and has treated you so unkindly.—Come then, my dear girl; and come soon to the arms of your truly affectionate friend,

ELIZA SELWYN.

LETTER LIII.

MISS MAITLAND TO MRS. SELWYN.

Belle Farm, Sept. 20, 1779.

MY DEAR ELIZA,

WITH pleasure did I receive an invitation so considerately and so kindly given; and have obtained permission to accept of it.—Though I sincerely rejoice at Clayton's restoration to health,—and can so far suppress my own wishes as to feel a satisfaction at the completion of his,—I think with you, that it may contribute more, both to their ease and my own, for me to be at a distance, when the day which is to unite them arrives, than to keep my ground, as my father expresses it.

Thursday next, as I hear, is the day fixed; and Mrs. Clayton wishing that Doctor S—— may join their hands, they are to be married at our parish church.

Miss

Miss Burrell has consented to gratify the old lady in this point, and a Miss Lascelles, her friend and confidante, is to accompany her to Woodland Cot.

I will therefore come, my dear Eliza, lest my willows should excite too much attention here, and draw a censure from our neighbours on the persons that have entwined my brows with an adornment so little becoming, and which is never worn by choice.

Were it not that such a conduct might be construed into a despicable tameness, or perhaps a worse construction be put upon it, so vast and so disinterested is my love for Clayton, that I think I could officiate as bride maid to my happy rival, or even say with Emma,

This potent beauty, this triumphant fair,
This happy object of our different care,
Her let me follow ; her let me attend
A servant, she may scorn the name of friend ;
What she demands incessant I'll prepare ;
I'll weave her garlands, and I'll plait her hair ;
My

My busy diligence shall deck her board,
 (For there at least I may approach my lord.)
 And when her Clayton's softer hours advise
 His servant's absence, with dejected eyes,
 Far I'll recede, and sighs forbid to rise.

It may appear like vanity in me to say this, but could it give my much loved Clayton any satisfaction, I think I am possessed of magnanimity enough to do it.

I informed you in my last, that I was apprehensive lest my father's resentment should exceed all bounds at the disappointment of his favourite wish.—He was indeed very vociferous upon the occasion; and was not sparing of his threats.—In one of the paroxysms of his wrath, he stamp'd with his gouty foot so violently upon the ground, that he brought on by it a smart fit in his great toe.—So that now the effects of his passion are confined within the limits of his own bed chamber; and
 will

will not conduce to interrupt the felicity of the happy pair.—I have, notwithstanding his confinement, obtained his permission to obey your kind summons;—such is the deference he pays to any request of yours.—I shall accordingly be with you on Wednesday next, the day before that which will constitute the beginning of a new æra both to Clayton and myself.—May it prove a period of happiness to him, whatever it may be to me.—Adieu till I see you,

HARRIET MAITLAND.

LETTER LIV.

MR. CLAYTON TO J. N. WINDHAM,
ESQ.

Woodland Cot, Sept. 26, 1779.

CAN a man, Jack, be said to be a *married man*, while yet the marriage ceremony sounds in his ears,—
before

before he has “climbed the high top—
“gallant of his joy?”—If he is entitled
to that honourable appellation at so
early a period, then hail thy friend by
it; for really and truly a Benedict am
I.—This morning, about the hour of
ten, I repeated after the Reverend
Doctor S——, the irrevocable vow.

And who dost think the lady is, to
whom I am so suddenly and unexpected-
ly united?—Shall I tell thee plump, at
once, or play a little, as I am in a
trifling humour, with thy curiosity? I
will do the latter.—It is not then to *the*
lady that my last letter gave thee some
reason to expect would be *the lady*; but
to *a lady* whom thou couldst never,
from the train of circumstances I have
already informed thee of, have supposed
to be *the lady*;—and yet, of whom a
sudden and unexpected event, has made
me the husband.

Carried off by a mad brained lover, it fell to my lot to be her rescuer.—Hearing the cries of a damsel in distress, knight-errant like, I flew to her succour, and rescued her from the hands of the ravishers, at the expence of a few wounds in my head, which were pronounced to be mortal.—About to take my departure for that country “from whose bourn no traveller returns,” I made a public confession of the state of my heart. Even in the presence of her with whom I had lately entered into fresh engagements, I made known my superior attachment to the lady I had rescued.—Instigated by an unparalleled magnanimity, and moved by my situation, the generous girl made no hesitation to declare that, preferring my happiness to her own, she gave up every claim upon me, and centered every wish in my restoration to health;—my mother, anxious for the life of her
her

her beloved son, yielded her will to my inclinations ;—and the lady herself not saying nay,—my mind grew composed, —my wounds healed,—and after a few hasty preparations, I was this morning united to the adorable—Miss Burrell.

Thus, my dear Windham, have I at length, by an unexpected revolution, the happiness to call one of the finest women in the universe mine ; to the great mortification of many of the finest fellows in the county.

As every happiness, in my opinion, is increased by participation, I have sat down to impart to thee these marvellous tidings.—When the circling hours shall have calmed a little my fluttering heart ; and my ideas, now in a state of effervescence, begin to subside ; I will write again.—At present they are too much engrossed by love's vagaries, to permit me to proceed with any degree of congruity.—I will therefore put an

end to my letter, and subscribe myself

Thy sincere friend, and
the happiest of mortals,

C. CLAYTON.

P. S. Not being as yet, so thoroughly a *married man* as to communicate the contents of my letter to my wife, I have no additional compliments to send thee.—Of thy travels hereafter.

LETTER LV.

MR. THOMAS SCORER TO MRS. MARY
SCORER.

Calais, in France, Sept. 20, 1779.

DEAR WIFE,

I Hope you received the short letter I wrote you from London, informing you of the failure of our plot, and of the squire's consequent resolution to set off

off for France, till we know whether the wounds of the gentleman we knocked down upon the road, are mortal or not.—So here we all are, brother landlord, squire, driver and I, among the French bougers, without any of us being able to speak a word of their lingo.—Though to be sure there are Englishmen enough here to keep company with, that have fled their country as well as we.

As soon as this reaches your hands, send somebody you can depend upon to make enquiry about the gentleman.—His name, as we have since learnt, is Clayton.—He lives with his mother, at a place called Woodland cot, near —, about thirty miles from our village, not far out of the London road.—The squire also desires you would find out what is become of the young lady we were carrying off; for if we should ever live to come back, he says, he will have t'other touch at her.—You

may know this of landlord's wife at the Crown, at ———. Send the same person there.—And the moment he has gained what intelligence he can, get the little barber (who I suppose you have employed to read this and my last) to write a letter for you.

Direct your letter for *Mouncebeer Mouncebeer my Lor Anglay*, to be left at the *Leon-dargeon*, Calais, in France. That is the name the squire is known by here, and by directing so, no body in England will know who it is intended for.—As people must wonder what is become of me, by my being so long absent, tell them that the squire, while I was at his house, took me with him, in a frolick, to London.

Now I am writing, I must tell you a bit about France. I thought I should have died with laughing to see the medley of people by which we were surrounded when we landed. The
pier

pier was crowded with great, fat, bareheaded friars,—smart dapper officers,—fishermen with greasy woollen night caps, and wooden shoes,—and waiters from the different hotels.—We were pestered to death by the latter, all bellowing in our ears, at once, the names of the inns to which they belonged. I never heard such queer names as they give their signs in my life.—Our sign of the Fox and Hounds beats them all. One cried out the *Chapo Ruge*,—another *Mouncebeer Design*,—a third the *Vil de Londers*,—a fourth the *Leon-dargeon*.

In this manner they went on, making such a bustle about us, that the squire was obliged to trip up the heels of two or three of them to clear the way. At last we were hurried by the waiter of the Silver Lion (for that you must know is the English of the *Leon-dargeon*) to the guard-house, where I thought they were going to make us all prison-

ers of war ; but after setting down our names in a book, they suffered us to proceed to the inn.

The first thing we did, was to look at the larder ; where there was hares, partridges, and *pea jobns*, (as they called them) in abundance. The squire ordered a handsome dinner ; and we endeavoured to make ourselves as merry as we could in our melancholy situation. Do you know, that hares and partridges are not considered as game, in this country, but are the property of the holders of estates, and are brought to market like fowls and ducks ?—The consequence of this is, that there being no poachers, the fields are stocked with them ;—the gentlemen find plenty of sport ;—and the common people can indulge themselves with tasting now and then a bit of partridge or hare, without fear of an information.

I had

I had forgot to tell you that we were all deadly sick during the passage; the squire in particular;—but it made us as hungry as hunters when we got ashore.—The sea ran mountains high; though the sailors made nothing of it.—But what frightened us the most, was, to be crammed eighteen or twenty of us into an old leaky French boat, at half a league's distance from the mouth of the harbour.—I made sure we should all have gone to the bottom before we reached it.—They said this was done, because the vessel could not get over the bar; but I was afterwards told it was only intended to put half a crown a head into the pockets of the boatmen, with whom the captains of the ships are supposed to go snacks.

My dear, I hope to God you will send us good news, for I am heartily tired of being among these outlandish people. And was it not that we have good

wine here very cheap, and the squire takes care that there is no lack of it, I believe I should hang myself.

A damned bad affair we have made of it, to be thus obliged to run our country.—The squire, however, tells us we shall be no losers by it; and as I know him to be generous in affairs of this kind, I dare say he will be as good as his word.—My brother landlord does not lay it at all to heart, then why should I? He does nothing but drink; and his driver has not been sober since we left Yorkshire.

In order to pass away the time, I will endeavour to learn the French language, and as you know I was always remarkable for learning fast, I don't doubt but I shall be able to accomplish it. I already know the meaning of at least a dozen words, though I can't speak them; which shews, that

if I do but apply, I shall make a rapid progress.

The squire sends his service.—So no more at present from

Your loving husband, till death,

THOMAS SCORER.

P. S. Pray send us word how the gentleman is, as soon as possible.

LETTER LVI

MR. WINDHAM TO CHARLES CLAYTON,
Esq.

London, Oct. 4, 1779.

SINCE it is so, Charles, auspicious be the day that introduced my friend into the honourable society of married men.

E 6 ON,

Oh, wing'd with pleasure may it take its flight,
 And give each future morn a tincture of its
 white!

Accept my congratulations; and most respectfully present them to your beautiful bride.

Could any thing tempt me to change my condition, it would be the possession of so fine a woman as you have represented Mrs. Clayton to be; but till I can meet with one, who comes somewhat near her in point of beauty, I will remain single.—How far the contemplation of the enviable happiness of so dear a friend may act as a stimulative to my seeking out for such a one, I will not pretend to say. At present I do not entertain a hope.—My hour is not yet come.

In one of your former letters, you desire to have the account of my travels, then promised you, “as they
 might

might serve to amuse you and your new-married lady, (pardon the reminding; you was then on the point of being united to another;) after the fatigue attendant upon that rotine of formality and visiting, which are the customary, but troublesome appendages of a sacrifice to Hymen;" and further, "as it might prove an agreeable relaxation in supplying the place of fondness, when satiety shall have quenched, in some degree, the flammiferous torch of the saffron-robed god."—Now as the first of these reasons may still be alledgable for my proceeding with the said account, although the latter no longer exists; for surely satiety can never attend a love so flaming as thine; I will consider the injunction as still in force, and go on with it in hopes of furnishing you with some amusement.

Having

Having treated in my former letters of the state of the country and its inhabitants, I shall in this endeavour to give you some idea of the private life of the Egyptians.

The warmth of the climate rendering them inactive and fond of ease, during those hours in which their commercial or professional concerns do not claim attendance, they either recline on a sofa, (a piece of luxurious indulgence we have imported from those parts,) or upon seats, no less convenient and easy, amidst the delightful shades of their gardens.—I speak of the higher ranks, who are followed, in a degree, by the lower.

They rise with the first streaks of Aurora, in order to enjoy the refreshing coolness of the morning.—Their usual breakfast is coffee.—They dine about noon.—Their food consists, of poultry boiled with rice, and seasoned with saffron

fron and spices ;—of meat roasted on the coals, not in joints, as the roast beef of Old England, but cut into small pieces, and covered with the fat belonging to it ;—after being thus prepared, it is spitted, laid on the coals, and frequently turned ;—and I assure you, Charles, it is thereby rendered so tender and full of juices, that it would not be lightly esteemed by an English epicure. Besides the foregoing, there is generally a great variety of eatables displayed at the tables of the opulent ; as hashed meats, pigeons, (which are here remarkably fine,) stuffed cucumbers, melons, and other fruits.

They sup about an hour after sunset ; their dishes then are nearly the same as those at their dinner, viz. poultry, rice, vegetables and fruit.—Coffee is taken by them at all hours, as they esteem it an excellent fortifier of the stomach against the relaxation occasioned by the heat.

heat. They eat, in general, very moderately. In the evening they usually amuse themselves in boats upon the Nile, or enjoy the cooling breeze, among the verdant and sweet-scented groves upon the banks of that river.

When the men visit each other, the master of the house receives his visitors with more cordiality than compliment. If they are his equals, they are seated by him, with their legs across;—if his inferiors, they squat themselves on their heels, as the original natives of North America and of the southern parts of Africa do.—Those, whose elevated rank entitles them to a greater degree of respect, are seated on sofas, from whence they can overlook the rest of the company. The visitors are then presented with pipes and coffee; after this, with sweet meats and sherbet; and during their stay, perfumes are burnt in the middle of the room. Just before

fore they withdraw, odoriferous essences, of great value, burning upon a silver plate, are presented to each of the guests, who therewith perfumes his beard. At the conclusion of the ceremony, rosewater is poured upon their head and hands. The rosewater used throughout Egypt is of the most exquisite scent. It is manufactured at a place in Upper Egypt called Faïoum; where this fragrant flower grows in the greatest profusion. It preserves its odour a long time, and is sold at a very high price.

The dress of the men consists of long robes, which reach down to their heels. They either wear a turban on their heads, or a shawl, made of a long piece of silk or woollen stuff.—Around their middle they wear a girdle, as the other sex do. They cut their hair, but let the beards grow with all the luxuriance nature can supply. It would make thee
smile,

smile, to see with what gravity they walk along the streets; the gambols of the most funny monkey, or the tragicomic faces of the dancing dogs, would not be able to extort a smile from them. In general they carry a knife, as a weapon of defence.

The dress of the higher ranks of women, consists of a long black silk cloak, which covers the whole person, somewhat in the manner of a domino. Over their faces they wear a large white veil. Their hair, which is long and black, they form into tresses, and mix with it valuable essences; so that both to the sight and the smell, this first of feminine adornments affords a delightful regale. They have a custom of blackening the edge of their eyelids, which has a pretty effect. They likewise make an addition to their eyebrows with a preparation called *cobel*; and stain the finger and toe nails of a golden colour

lour with *benné*, a shrub which grows common here.

They wear drawers; in the elegance of which they strive to outvie each other. During the summer, these are composed of an embroidered muslin; in the winter, of silk and gold brocaded stuffs. Their shifts are made of silk and cotton, light and transparent as gauze. Around their heads, they wear Indian handkerchiefs, ornamented with diamonds. And they stick in their fine black hair, pearls formed into the shape of crescents. Girdles, made of the wool of Cachemire, which is even finer than silk, and of great price, encircle their waists. These serve to bind together their flowing robes. Such is the dress of the better sort of the Egyptian women. Can any thing be more elegant, and tend more to display the graces of the person? By my faith, Charles, taken all together, I never saw women, excepting

excepting those of my own country, more attractive than those in Egypt; more particularly the Georgian and Circassian women, purchased by the Turkish inhabitants to become their wives.

The lower class wear a blue shift made very large, and likewise a long pair of drawers. Their faces are covered with a piece of linen, in which are holes, placed opposite to their eyes, to enable them to see their way. The skin of the Egyptian women, through the heat of their climate, is very brown, and swarthy; but nature being permitted to take her natural course, their features are regular and pleasing, and their persons graceful.

As they are esteemed by their husbands according to the number of children they bear, they devoutly pray for a numerous progeny; and being confined to the harem, and engaged chiefly in
their

their domestic concerns, the rearing and educating their children is considered by them as their principal duty.

Through custom, a subserviency prevails among the women, that an English wife would not submit to.—They never are admitted to the tables of the men.—When a person of consideration chuses to dine with one of his wives, he gives her previous notice of his coming.—As soon as she is honoured with the message, she provides for him those dishes she knows he is most fond of, and pays him the most respectful attention.

Among the lower ranks, an equal degree of superiority on the part of the husband, is kept up during the time he dines.—The women stand submissively by, or seat themselves at a distance.

The Egyptian women, however, are not without their recreations.—They
are

are permitted to go to the bath once or twice a week, where they pass the day among their own sex.—There the Almé, (of whom I shall give you some account in my next letter) entertain them with songs and dances, or amuse them with affecting tales of love; they are likewise permitted frequently to visit their female relations and friends; and they are farther allowed to go to the tombs of their deceased relatives, around which they sing funeral hymns.

In the visits of the women to one another, the utmost cordiality and cheerfulness reigns.—During these visits the husband is not permitted to approach the harem.—A prohibition, which not unfrequently affords those of the women who have a turn for gallantry, an opportunity to introduce a lover in the attire of a female friend.—Excluded from society as the dear creatures are, and impetuous in their
passions,

passions, through the climate, and the restraint they undergo, it is no wonder, Charles, that they have recourse to such artifices.

The young girls resort to the banks of the Nile, to wash the linen, and to procure water for domestic uses.— Having rubbed themselves with the mud of the river, they frequently throw themselves into the water, and swim with a facility and vigour, which proves that though delicate, they are not wanting in strength and agility.

Indeed the children of both sexes are early instructed in the art of swimming; which is rendered necessary by the great number of canals they are often obliged to cross, in order to go from one village to another.— Upon this occasion, both men and women throw off all their habiliments, and wrapping them round their heads, thus in a state of nature swim across.— The lat-

ter

ter usually reserve a small piece of linen to cover themselves withal.—And where, my dear Charles, dost thou think they place it?—Whisper!—No.—They place it before their *faces*.—What would an European woman think of this mode of defending herself against too curious observers?—But I have often heard it asserted by casuists in these matters, that a truly modest and delicate woman, surprised in a perfect state of nakedness, would spontaneously clap her hands before *her eyes*.

The Egyptian women are extravagantly fond of attending the public baths.—They look forward with a pleasing expectation to the days in which they are to resort to them, and consider it as a festival.—They are cleanly in their persons, *if possible*, to an extreme.—They not only lave themselves in the bath, and undergo all the usual operations, but they afterwards wash

wash themselves with rose water, so that as they walk, they are surrounded, as one may say, by an atmosphere of odours.—A mode of attraction, that I wish, Charles, was rather more attended to by our fair countrywomen.

Europeans entertain an idea that the Mahometans have a great number of wives.—Their law allows them four, but many of them are contented with one; as a man cannot espouse a woman without assigning her a dowry proportionable to his circumstances.—In the celebration of their marriages, a great deal of pomp and ceremony is observed.

When a young man marries, his wife, whom he has never seen, is chosen for him by his female acquaintance.—The consent of the father of the young man being obtained, and the dowry fixed on, she is led to the bath, and in presence of those she was chosen by, goes through

the usual operations, embellishments, and recreations. She then returns home; and, after a short stay, being torn, with a well counterfeited reluctance, from the embraces of her weeping mother, she is conducted, with great pomp, to the house of her intended husband.

The cavalcade upon these occasions is sometimes of considerable length, and very magnificent. In the midst of it marches the bride veiled, and richly ornamented. Being arrived at the house, the men and women separate, and all pass the night in merriment. During this, the almé or dancing girls, exert their abilities; and to conform themselves in some measure to the hymeneal rites, display a voluptuousness in their motions and gestures, that an European can form no ideas of. As was the custom among the Greeks, an epithalamium is performed. At length the company being retired, the bridegroom enters the nuptial

tial chamber;—the veil is taken off;—and he for the first time sees the person he has wedded.—If the bride has never been married before, it is necessary that her husband should receive indisputable proofs of her chastity, otherwise he has a right to send her back, the next day, to her parents; which is reckoned a very great dishonour.

As the Mahometans thus marry without having previously seen each other, a man is permitted by the laws to repudiate his wife, if he entertains any dislike for her.—In this case he must bestow on her the portion stipulated before marriage, and whatever effects he may have received with her. If they have any children, the husband retains the boys, and the wife takes away the girls.

Nor are the Mahometan women such slaves as they are supposed by the Europeans to be. Should they be able to exhibit any just cause of complaint, they

F 2 implore

implore the protection of the laws, and a separation is permitted. But the loss of her dowry, and of the effects she brought, is the consequence of her regaining her liberty.

The poor as well as the rich observe the same ceremonies at their marriages, only with a less degree of splendour.

In my description of the dress of the women, I have told thee that the higher ranks cover their faces with large veils, and the *bourgeoisies* with pieces of linen. But notwithstanding the intercourse of the eyes is thus obstructed, the dear rogues have a mode of conveying their sentiments, and that even without speaking. As this is the only language they ever use in public, they are much more skilled in the art of communication by signs, than the most complete European courtesan.—Nor do they scruple to indulge themselves in the only liberty that is allowed them. Though it is criminal
for.

for a stranger to speak to them, and dangerous even to look at them, yet, Charles, means are to be found that he shall not die of despair.

As I would have these extracts from my memorandums to be considered by thee, Charles, only as an interlude between more important scenes, and would not wish to interrupt, too long at a time, those uxorious attentions so fine a woman claims, at least during the revolution of the honey moon, I will make this letter shorter than my former ones, and here put an end to it.—And, if I do not find that they break in too much upon you, will send you another, in a few days, of about the same length; which, with one more, will, I think, contain all the material circumstances of my voyage to Egypt, unless I had begun my account of them upon a larger scale.

Till then adieu.

J. N. WINDHAM.

LETTER LVII.

MISS LASCELLES TO MRS. CLAYTON,
JUN.

—, October 12, 1779.

THIS serves, at once to let my dear Bella know that I am got home, and to convey to her, and her new connections, my thanks for the civilities I received during my stay at Woodland Cot.

May the felicity you seem at present to enjoy, prove as permanent as the early buds of it promise!—I must now acknowledge, notwithstanding all my former jobations and admonitions, that your *enlevement* by squire Acres has turned out to be a fortunate event for you. A richer husband might have fallen to your lot, and a wish of this kind caused
those

those admonitions and jobations; but I am free to confess, that, according to the present appearance of things you could not, upon the whole, have made a better choice.

I have executed the commission Mr. Clayton intrusted me with, relative to the beforementioned adventurous gentleman; and find, that he and his adherents, fearing that their blows were laid on with too heavy a hand, and consequently that they were become amenable to the laws, had immediately set off for London, and from thence had taken themselves to some part of France.—So that Mr. Clayton must, for the present, give up all hopes of redress.

And even when opportunity offers, I hope he will content himself with having recourse to the laws; for although Acres is possessed of three thousand pounds a year, Mr. Clayton will find

him too despicable a character to be called out on the footing of a gentleman.—Spoiled by the fond indulgence of his mother, his education was confined; and he was permitted to consort himself with low, profligate company. And such, even now he is come to the possession of his fortune, are his only companions.—When he hears of Mr. Clayton's recovery, he will probably return to Hareland Hall, and rest himself secure in his opulence.—Methods, however, may then be used to deter him from a repetition of such unwarrantable actions.

Having so lately seen you, I cannot recollect any thing that I have further to communicate to you at this time. Besides, by the step you have lately taken, have you not robbed me of many of the topicks that used to furnish me with subjects for my letters? You must there-

therefore content yourself with a shorter
one than usual, from,

Dear Bella,

Your sincere friend,

ANNA LASCELLES.

P. S. Respects and compliments to all.

LETTER LVIII.

MR. CLAYTON TO J. N. WINDHAM,
ESQUIRE.

Woodland Cot, Oct. 10, 1779.

DEAR WINDHAM,

HAD not unavoidable circumstances
happened to delay my thanking
you for your account of Egypt, I should
have thought myself very unfriendly and
unpolite in not doing it before this.
I was on the point of writing to you for
that purpose when the misadventure;
I mentioned in my last, befel me;—
when

when, strange to tell, a few desperate wounds on my head were the means of my obtaining a cure for an equally desperate wound in my heart.

This, with the unexpected, but fortunate consequences, will, I flatter myself, prove a sufficient apology. And now the hymeneal baffle is pretty well over, and the tornado, in which my ideas and passions have been whirled about for some time past, begins to subside, I will no longer neglect the claims of civility and friendship.

I do not mean, Jack, that I am, as yet got out of fool's paradise, as the wise folks call it.—No—though the delirium is somewhat calmed, the fervour of passion is unallayed.—Satiety has hitherto made no advances to sap my happiness. I still as fervently love, as on the day which gave my charming Arabella to my arms.

But

But lest you may think I endeavour, not only to stimulate you by my example, but likewise by the description I give of my happiness, to enter into a state you have taken so early a dislike to; and at some future period, your love of variety being returned with its usual vehemence, you may have reason to blame me for so doing; I will drop the subject; only adding, that the dear object of my adoration begs I would present her compliments to you; with assurances of her esteem, as being the confidential friend of her Clayton.

How I have wandered from the topic with which I begun my letter, and which should have claimed my first attention!—I esteem myself, Windham, much indebted to you for your account of Egypt.—Your letters have not only served as an amusement, but I have gained so much knowledge from them, that your discontinuance of them would

be an inexpressible disappointment to me.

The Egyptians being a people of whose concerns, my ideas, in common with Europeans, have been hitherto very imperfect, the information you convey to me relative to them has at once novelty and usefulness to recommend it.—As often as we happen to be alone, which you may suppose is but seldom, I read your letters to my dear *wife*, (there's a Benedict for you, Jack!) and to my mother, who are both much pleased with them, and speak in high terms of the writer. Proceed therefore, my dear friend, and be as copious, as your time and inclination will permit.

The troublesome routine is not yet at an end.—Visitors call me away.—I must therefore conclude.—And this I shall do with intreating thee to write again

again soon ; by which you will oblige
others besides,

Dear Windham,

Thy sincere friend,

C. CLAYTON.

LETTER LIX.

MR. WINDHAM TO CHARLES CLAYTON,
Esq.

London, Oct. 16, 1779.

DEAR CHARLES,

YOUR approbation of the remarks
I made during my stay in Egypt,
gives me pleasure ; as I know thee too
well to suppose you would let any
friendly partiality bias your judgment,
or induce you to give any other than
an impartial opinion of them.—I am
also highly flattered by the favourable
recep-

reception they met with from the ladies. — These united commendations prove as an incentive towards my proceeding, and I will accordingly go through with them.

I will, however, hope that prudence directed you, as you read to the fair circle, to suppress such parts as favoured of too much levity; and I trust that you will still continue to do so, as they fall in your way. For these little exuberances of libertinism, were they to be scanned by a less friendly eye than thine, may be construed into licentiousness:

The more I reflect, Charles, on the extraordinary circumstances that have conduced to bring thy present happiness about, the more I am persuaded that there is an irresistible destiny which rules the fate of man. Have I not more than once, during our present correspondence, repeated this to thee, with confi-

confidence in its verification?—And have not all the subsequent events of thy fortune tended to confirm it?

In the first place, so near marriage with Miss Maitland;—then desperately in love, through an accidental meeting, with Miss Burrell;—again, thy vows renewed with thy first love;—not long after, these newly-spliced vows suddenly snapped asunder by an equally unexpected revolution;—a train of marvellous circumstances ensue, viz. a rencontre in the true Quixote stile;—a rescue;—blows;—bloodshed;—and a last dying speech and confession;—all which terminate in marriage:—Argal, this marriage, notwithstanding all these seeming obstructions, *was to be*.

Dost thou not remember thy joking, in a former letter to me, of last dying speeches, &c.?—Little didst thou then imagine before whom and upon what occasion they would be made!—Thou
 feest,

feest that, agreeable to the old proverb, many a true word may be spoken in jest.

By my soul, Charles, I am at a loss to account for all these things,—and begin to think that I, even *I*, shall one time or other be forced by that same Madam Destiny to take upon me the *honourable title*, as thou callest it, of a married man. I have long protested against it, but I see from the revolutions of thy life, that there is no withstanding the tyrannical lady's determinations.

Would it not therefore be better, think ye, Charles, as I *must* submit, to do it with a good grace, and by seeking out the fair damsel that dropped from the clouds to be my wife, (for according to all accounts, we came from above in pairs,) meet Mrs. Destiny half-way?—Perhaps, if I do so, she may prove the kinder.

Well!

Well! I will some time or other bestow a thought upon it.—But whenever I do, the damsel, whoever she is, must be possessed of charms, which, if not in so capital a stile as those of thy fair lady, must be above the common run of beauty; and as Young describes his *Narcissa* to be, she must be “as good as fair; and wise as good; and young as wise; and rich as young, &c. &c. &c.”

But I will no longer detain thee with this small talk from what, you have been pleased to say, furnishes you at once with amusement and instruction.

Having already mentioned the *Almé*, or dancing girls of Egypt, it will be necessary here to give you some account of them; but though they afforded me much pleasure when I had an opportunity of seeing their extraordinary performances, and it is a subject conge-

congenial to my own taste, I fear I shall not be able to do justice to them in my description.

The Almé constitute a numerous and distinguished society; being composed of the finest and most accomplished girls that Egypt produces.—To be qualified for their profession, it is not only necessary that they should possess a graceful and agile person, in order to dance with grace and activity, but that they should have a good voice,—be perfectly acquainted with the language,—and of such a lively imagination, and ready wit, as to be able to compose extempore verses, and sing them, as accidental circumstances may require.—In short, they are most of them of first rate abilities; they have a cultivated understanding, and are agreeable and sprightly in their conversation.

The

The dances they perform, are pantomime ballets, such as were used formerly by the Greeks, and such as the English have lately seen introduced upon their own stages, particularly at the Opera house.—In them the common occurrences of life are represented.—But the scenes here are most generally taken from the mysteries of love.—In these, it is impossible to convey to thee, Charles, an adequate idea of their amorous contortions.—They were sometimes carried to such a height, that libertine as I am, I could scarcely forbear blushing at them.—And yet the Turks sit and enjoy them with the greatest gravity, and admit the Almé to their harems, to amuse and instruct their women in them.

The performances of these girls constitute the principal ingredient towards the amusement at all festivals.—Without them the Egyptian feasts would
afford

afford but dull entertainment.—Like the band of music in our assembly rooms, they are placed in a rostrum, from whence, during the repast, they sing.—Their songs upon these occasions sometimes consist of light gay airs, but generally of pathetic ones, in which they have the art to dissolve the minds of their hearers in a tender melancholy. They sometimes recite extemporaneous encomiums on the principal guests.

When the repast is finished, they descend into the saloon, and begin the dance.—They first lay aside their veils.—Their dress then consists of a long robe of very thin silk, which reaches down to their heels, and is slightly fastened round their middle with a rich girdle — Their long black hair flows in plaits upon their shoulders.

The suppleness of their bodies is not to be conceived.—The instruments they usually dance to, are the flute,
cas-

castinets, the tambour de basque, and cymbals.—Their steps are regulated by the found, and by songs applicable to the scene, which they sing at the same time. At first, their movements are within the bounds of decorum; but at length, animated by the subject, they appear as if they were frantic, and throw off every degree of decency.—The more expressively amorous the contortions of their bodies are, the more agreeable they become to the spectators; who know not how to controul their plaudits.—Is it not amazing, Charles, that people naturally grave, as the Turks here are, and likewise under the restraints of their Coran, should thus *publicly* indulge themselves in such libidinous scenes?—But that they do so, I can assure thee.

The lower ranks, who generally imitate their superiors, are not without their amusements of this kind.—They also have their Almé, but of a degree suited

suiting to their station.—They have neither the sense nor the elegance of those of the principal society.—However, though they do not come up to them in the graces of person or movements, they are not a jot behind hand with them in the licentiousness of their gestures and attitudes.

These are to be met with in all the public walks and places of resort; while the superior Almé confine themselves to the gratification of the rich, by whom they are liberally paid.

From the foregoing account, it is not to be wondered at, if, what with the warmth of the climate, their natural inactivity, and these stimulating scenes, the passions of the inhabitants of Egypt are not easily controlled.

The exhibitions of these girls are not, however, confined to such scenes as solely promote mirth. They make a principal part in the funeral processions of the rich,
singing

singing melancholy dirges, and breaking out into groans and lamentations.— I think I have already observed, that at the celebration of the Egyptian marriages, they march before the bride, playing on musical instruments, and bear a considerable share in the entertainments of the day.

As a proper supplement to the foregoing article, I will add the following extract from my common-place book. A pilgrimage to the temple of *Serapis* at Canopus, was anciently considered by the inhabitants of this country as one of the most zealous acts of devotion, and as affording the happiest opportunity for the indulgence of their looser passions. At that time there was a navigable canal from the city of Alexandria to Canopus ; which was crowded day and night with boats filled by pilgrims of both sexes, who seemed rather to be going to the temple of Cytherea, than

than of Serapis. The most unbounded licentiousness reigned at these feasts. Singing, dancing, and every species of pleasure, more than religion, were the powerful charm that drew such numbers together.

O, how I should have liked to have lived in those days!—No such doings now, Charles!—at least not such an universal allowance of public festivals, during which every sensual indulgence was allowable.

Though the magnificence is less, and the voluptuousness not so extensive, feasts of the same nature are still kept up by the different religious sects of this country.—The Pagans anciently went to the temple of Serapis.—The Turks now go to the tombs of their Santons;—and the Coptis to the churches of their Saints.—And all agree in this one point, that pleasure as well as religion constitutes the motive.

Nothing

Nothing can be more refreshing, grateful, and healthy, than the use of the warm baths, with which all the principal places in Egypt abound. To the injunction of Mahomet, the necessity of taking off the effects of continual perspiration in so warm a climate, induce this people to have frequent recourse to them.

I shall not enter into a minute description of the form of the buildings appropriated to this purpose, but content myself with saying that they are at once useful and ornamental. The apartments within are spacious. That in which the bath is placed, is paved and lined with marble.

While you lie in the warm water, indulging the most grateful sensations, perfumes are burnt; which mixing with the stream wherein you are enveloped, produce a delightful effect. After you have enjoyed this luxury for some time, an

attendant, with a glove upon his hand, composed of stuff, gently rubs you, till he has removed all obstructions from the pores of the skin. He then brings you a box of depilatory pomatum, which, in an instant, takes the hair off from the places to which it is applied—This *depluming* (if I may so call it) is practised by both sexes, in Egypt, as well as in Turkey.

The ancients, according to the accounts handed down to us by Homer, carried this salutary indulgence to a much greater height than the modern inhabitants of those countries now do. I need not point out to you, the passages in the *Odyssæy* where he tells us, that Telemachus, when at the court of Pylos, was washed by the *fair* hands of Nestor's *fairest* daughter; who anointed his body with precious oils; and having done this, dressed him in a rich and splendid habit.—O, Charles! how many good old customs

customs lie neglected and forgotten in these our days!

You have heard of the Pfylli of this country, I doubt not. Their powers are really amazing. The bite of a viper is but an amusement to them, and they eat several kinds of serpents without the least apprehension. Their power over these venomous reptiles is supposed to be derived from a secret antidote they make use of.

I was told by those on whose veracity I can depend, that at the celebration of some of the Egyptian festivals, these people walk in the procession, holding in their hands enormous serpents, and assuming the looks and gestures of madmen. The creatures wreath themselves round the bodies of their holders, and endeavour to make their escape. But the Pfylli grasp them by the neck in such a manner as to avoid their bite, and when they have sufficiently exhibited their dex-

terity, tear them to pieces with their teeth, and devour them alive. While these are devouring them, others of the fraternity, for there are a considerable number of them, endeavour to snatch them away, and to partake of the horrid feast.—The spectators behold the terrific scene with pleasure mixed with astonishment, and the Mahometans impute the safety of the Psylli to the miraculous interposition of their prophet.

Among other singularities of this country, worthy of notice, may be reckoned their method of producing chicken without the incubation of the hen; and likewise the treatment of their bees.

At Mansoura, a modern town situated near the place where the river Nile divides into two branches, there are a great number of exceeding large ovens erected for the purpose of producing chicken. As I cannot enter minutely
into

into the process of this extraordinary operation, without prolixity; suffice it to say, that after being attended, during the time limited by nature, with great skill and care, the eggs yield forth their newly-animated contents, and thousands of chicken are produced on the same day. On the morrow, they are cried about the streets, and sold to the housekeepers, for about a halfpenny English each, who have a method of rearing them, even from that early stage of their existence, without the help of the dam.

The method of feeding their bees is no less singular. As the seasons in Upper Egypt are earlier than in the Delta, the inhabitants of the latter send their bees in boats into that country to feed. Large boats are freighted with hives of them for this purpose, which go gradually up the river; and the boatmen who have the management of

them, stop at every place where they find flowers and verdure.

The bees at break of day leave their cells, and having made several trips, and laden themselves with the spoils of the spot, return at night to their habitations, without ever mistaking the hive to which they belong. The proprietors distinguish their hives by different marks, and pay the boatmen according to the number of them. By this means the Egyptians procure the finest flavoured honey, and bees-wax in great abundance.

Egypt, as you must well know, was anciently the principal seat of the sciences, particularly of astronomy. For their celebrity in this science they were probably indebted to the state of their atmosphere; the night here being remarkably bright and clear, and the stars more distinguishable and brilliant than in more temperate climates. And this scene,

scene, so favourable to the study, is seldom interrupted by darkness or tempests, as in other countries.

Sometimes indeed, sudden tornados will arise, which raise such clouds of hot dust, as nearly obscure the light of the sun, and diffuse a pale gloom over the face of nature. These, however, chiefly happen in the day, and when travellers are surprised by them in the sandy deserts, they are in the most imminent danger of being buried alive.

I shall conclude this letter with an account of the manner in which the pilgrimages from Grand Cairo to Mecca, in honour of their prophet, Mahomet, are conducted.

In the neighbourhood of Cairo, there is a large plain, on which the pilgrims assemble the day before they set off. They there encamp; and the ground, to a very considerable extent, is covered with tents. In general, the tents amount

to upwards of ten thousand. The outsides of those belonging to the officers and chiefs are composed of painted linen; the insides are lined with fatten, and the cushions curiously embroidered with gold and silver. During the night a splendid illumination is produced by a great number of glass lamps of various colours, which are placed round every tent.

The relations and friends of the pilgrims pass the night with them; and as soon as the day breaks, by order of the Emir Hajji, (the commander of the caravans) the drums and trumpets give the signal for marching. Every man now strikes his tent; and having before supplied himself with sufficient baggage and provision, places it on a camel, and begins his journey. A few ladies, borne in litters, likewise usually make part of the cavalcade.

The

The departure of the caravan is extremely magnificent. First march the vanguard, escorted by a body of cavalry, very well mounted. Next in order comes the camel which bears the sacred tapestry designed to cover the house of the prophet. The head of the camel is decorated with a handsome plume of feathers, and his back covered with cloth of gold. On every side of the honoured beast march the priests, singing hymns from the alcoran. After this come a great multitude of pilgrims, some on foot, others on horses, or on camels. Different troops of cavalry, amounting in the whole to five or six thousand, are distributed in different bodies to secure the flanks of the caravan; as it seldom escapes an attack from the Arabs.

It is nearly impossible to conceive the difference there is in the appearance of this great body upon their set-

ting out and at their return. When they leave Cairo, the men are neat in their dress, and appear to be in health and vigour. Their horses also are full of fire and activity, and the camels in good condition. When they come back, the scene is quite changed; the pilgrims are pale, lank, and sunburnt, the quadrupeds weak and languid, and the whole nearly reduced to skeletons.

This is not to be wondered at, when we consider that the journey, which lasts forty days, is over sandy deserts, where the heat is excessive, and where they are sometimes obliged to travel forty or fifty leagues without finding a drop of water. The dust raised by the feet of such a number of men and animals likewise adds to the fatigue of the journey. The air is clouded by it; and the eyes and mouth so filled with it, as nearly to produce suffocation. The sand is sometimes rolled along,
with

with such fury, by the south-east winds, which are here in themselves pestiferous, that three or four hundred men have been known to perish at a time. This circumstance is attended with a great advantage to the commander of the caravan, as he is entitled to the whole of the effects of those who die on the road.

Though religion is the ostensible motive which induces the Egyptians to undertake this pilgrimage, it is not the only one. Every Mussulman is commanded by the precepts of his religion to visit the house of God once in his lifetime; and many repair to Mecca through this injunction. Interest, however, is the principal inducement of the greater part. A prodigious commerce is carried on during the fourteen days the Mahometans, who come from all quarters, remain there. There is not a

fair in the world to which a greater quantity of valuable articles are carried.

As soon as the caravan returns, all Cairo is in agitation. The inhabitants flock to know the fate of their friends and relations. And it is very seldom, but that most of the families of the pilgrims have to lament the loss of a son, a brother, a father, or a husband. Upon receiving the news, they burst out into the bitterest lamentations; while others appear to be distracted with joy at the safe arrival of those they value. A man that returns in safety from his pilgrimage, is looked upon as a superior being to what he was before. When he returns to his house, he finds it new painted, and the furniture all new, as if the old had been unworthy of so holy a person. From henceforward they bear the honourable title of *Hajji*, or the pilgrim.

The

The foregoing observations, though rather desultory, will serve to give you some idea of the customs and manners of the Egyptians. In my next, I shall proceed to their religion and government, with which I shall conclude my account. At some future period, I may perhaps submit to your perusal the whole of my notes, of which the detail I send you is only an epitome.

Believe me to be, at all times,

Dear Charles,

Yours sincerely,

J. N. WINDHAM.

LETTER LX.

MISS MAITLAND TO MRS. SELWYN.

Belle Farm, Oct. 24, 1779.

INDEBTED to you as I am, my dear Eliza, for the amended state both of my body and my mind, shall I not employ

employ the first leisure moment after my return to thank you for the affectionate attention that has contributed towards it?—I will.—Accept then, my dear friend, my sincere and heart-felt thanks for this fresh proof of kindness.

Had it not been for your considerate invitation, and the consolatory balm you have poured, during my visit, into my wounded heart; notwithstanding all my boasted magnanimity, I might have fallen a prey to jealousy and dejection. Under your prudent direction, the perturbations by which my soul was agitated, have subsided; my fortitude has recovered its wonted vigour; and I again find that my regard for Clayton rises superior to every meaner consideration.

I am sorry to inform you, that on my return home, I found the state of my father's health much more critical than when I left him.—You know he has
never

never been remarkable for restraining the sallies of his passion.—Upon the late disappointment of his wishes, he has been less so than ever.—This agitation of his mind has not confined the attacks of his disorder to his feet.—His head and stomach have at times felt the effects of it; and his physician is not without apprehensions for the consequences.—Heaven forbid that these apprehensions should be verified; as sorrow in the extreme would be my portion, were he to fall a sacrifice to his concern for me.

The folks at Woodland Cot, I hear, are engaged in an increasing circle of visiting and being visited.—It is said, a turn for dress, show, and dissipation, begins to display itself in a certain lady, which has already drawn on her some censures, as this propensity appears not to be confined within the limits of Clayton's means.

I will

I will hope, for Clayton's sake, that there is no just room for these censorious remarks; or at least, that he only submits to a *temporary* indulgence of it. During the first months of an union with a woman of such celebrated beauty, his will might be subjected by the fascinating power of her charms.—Time, however, may clear away the mist, and reason and prudence may recover their needful sway.

This shall be my hope.—And if you ask me, Eliza, why I thus anxiously interest myself in the concerns of a man, who no longer claims an anxious thought from me; I will candidly acknowledge that his welfare is still truly dear to me.

Had I been blest with the fruition of my wishes, I think I should have pursued a plan of domestic œconomy, which, without degrading him, would have been much more conducive to his
peace

peace of mind.—In my happier hours, I had digested such a plan in my imagination;—but one turn of Fortune's wheel has put this, with every other pleasing expectation, to flight.

Adieu, my dear Eliza;—I will endeavour to practise the lessons you have taught me.—If, however, the disinterested love I bear to Clayton, should carry me to any romantic lengths, consider it as a pardonable frailty in

Your friend,

HARRIET MAITLAND.

LETTER LXI.

MRS. CLAYTON JUN. TO MISS LASCELLES.

Woodland Cot, October 28, 1779.

YOU have often seen, at a country fair, my dear Anna, the boys and girls mounted on what they call a round-

roundabout; some in chaises, some on horses, and all equally delighted and happy.—Somewhat similar to this has been the state of your friend for more than a month past.—Engaged in a constant round of visits from and to the principal families in the neighbourhood, not one of the happy little rogues so whirled about, could feel more pleasing palpitations than I have done.—But as it is the nature, I believe, of every enjoyment to cloy, the sameness of the scene begins to abate the relish of it.

My predominant passion, as I told you it would, Anna, has already made some attempts to re-establish its empire in my mind; and I find an inclination towards an increase of that admiration I have ever been so fond of.—The sphere in which I now move, extensive as it is, seems too contracted for my capacious mind.—I long to exhibit in the great stage of the metropolis;—
and

and as I have hitherto shone with unrivalled lustre among the country belles and beaux, to try if I cannot maintain the same superiority even in a court.

Lord G——'s promise of making some provision under government for Clayton, (which, between you and I, Anna, I believe there may soon be a necessity for,) will serve as an excuse for my proposing a removal.—And as my lord and master, like all these lords of the creation when they crouch at the shrine of beauty, moves but as I direct, I will not let him rest till he consents to the execution of my plan.—When we get to town, I will take care that our establishment shall be on no very contracted scale.

I have likewise another reason for wishing to remove from this quarter of the world.—My triumph over my rival has been indeed complete.—I have snatched from her the long expected
bliss,

bliss, and have had the pleasure to see her wear the solitary willow. But amidst all the outward civility shewn me during the ceremonious round of nuptial etiquette, I could not help observing, that a cordial esteem was but seldom mingled with it, especially from my own sex.—And I further find, that whenever the merits of that lady and myself undergo a comparative view, which you may suppose they often do, her good qualities are set in competition with my beauty, and pity being thrown into the scale, the comparison does not always terminate in favour of your humble servant.—You will not therefore wonder at my wishing to remove as soon as possible to a scene of action, where no such ill-natured comparisons can be drawn; but where every shadow, that may happen to be in the portrait of your friend, will pass unheeded amidst the resplendency of her charms.

I have

I have snatched a few minutes, my dear Anna, from the bustle in which I am still engaged, thus to unbosom myself to you, as you know the doing this has always constituted one of my greatest pleasures.—What think you of my plan?—You have not been without your apprehensions, that by consulting my inclinations more than my interest, in my union with Clayton, I should lose all my sportive vivacity of temper, and dwindle into the fond subservient wife.—But you see, that is not the case, I am still, notwithstanding what I have mentioned above, the lively debonair girl I always was, and hope shall continue to be so, while I shall be able to subscribe myself

Your affectionate friend,

ARABELLA CLAYTON.

LETTER

LETTER LXII.

MR. CLAYTON TO J. N. WINDHAM,
ESQUIRE.

Woodland Cot, October 29, 1779.

DEAR WINDHAM,

I Was duly favoured with thy fourth letter relative to Egypt; the perusal of which afforded me an equal degree of satisfaction with the preceding ones, and makes me expect with impatience the remainder.

For my own reputation, you may be assured, that when I read them to the ladies, I took care to omit whatever favoured of libertinism.—Having now, as a *married man*, a character to support, I would not have them think that my dearest friend was a person of debauched principles.

As

As there is a probability, according to thy own apprehensions, that the match-making lady thou talk'st of will some time or other provide a wife for thee, let me advise thee to begin to mend thy manners in this point, or I will put in a caveat against thy being admitted into our *honourable* society.

The chief purport of my writing, next to thanking thee for thy letter, as above, is to inform thee that I have some thoughts of being in London, ere long.—Thou knowest my expectations from Lord G.—The increasing state of my expenditure, since my marriage, rendering an increase of finance needful, I intend soon after Christmas to wait on his lordship, who will then be in town, to remind him of his promise, and to enforce the fulfilment of it.—My lovely Bella, whose wishes are as forcible as commands to me, expressing a desire of accompanying me, I will beg the favour
of

of thee to be looking out for such apartments as you think will suit us, as near Grosvenor-square as possible. If I should find a courtier's promise less frangible than they are said to be, I can at my leisure provide myself with more convenient accommodations.

Although fate, and my own inclinations, have placed an irremovable bar between Miss Maitland and myself, I still entertain the most friendly regard for her. And as our residing in the neighbourhood, must frequently bring to her recollection the infidelity of thy friend, a view to her happiness, is among the motives for my removal.

I hope to hear from thee, by the return of the post; till when I remain

Ever thine,

C. CLAYTON.

P. S. To avoid repetition, Jack, always suppose the usual compliments
from

from my dear Mrs. C. and my mother,
to precede my signature.

L E T T E R LXIII.

MR. WINDHAM TO CHARLES CLAYTON,
ESQ.

London, Nov. 4, 1779.

DEAR CHARLES,

AS you seem so impatient for the continuation of my travels, I shall no longer detain you from it, than to tell you that I will pay due attention to your request, and (which I think I need not mention) shall be happy to pay my respects to your lady and you in town.

I have already informed you that the present inhabitants of Egypt are some of them Mahometans, as the Turks and Arabs, and the remainder Christians. A short account of the ancient religion of this country, which has been so much

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spoken

spoken of by the Greek and Roman writers, may not prove unentertaining.

There is no doubt but that the ancient Egyptians believed in God, the Creator, and likewise in the immortality of the soul. Being descended from Misraim, the grandson of Noah, they may have received the principles of their religion, as well as the Hebrews, from their common progenitor.

In the earlier stages of their state, their religion was founded on astronomy, a study I have mentioned as so congenial to their climate. They did not worship the luminaries themselves, but the invisible Being by whom they were created. In process of time, however, all except the priests, adored the *visible* object for the *invisible*; the symbol, for the divinity.

They adored the Supreme Being under the names of *Phtah*, of *Neith*, and of *Cneph*, three denominations, which appear to be characteristic of his attributes
of

of power, wisdom, and goodness. All the rest of their theology was allegorical of the courses of the sun, moon, stars, and the most striking phænomena of nature; expressed, previous to the invention of letters, by figures, or imitative characters, called hieroglyphicks. The antiquity of this kind of writing is probably anterior to the deluge; and it remains engraven, in numberless places on the marbles of the temples, the obelisks, and the walls of subterranean passages; but the knowledge of its meaning is now totally lost.

They worshipped the sun under the title of *Pbré*; afterwards under that of *Osiris*. During the reigns of the Ptolemies, another deity was introduced into their religious system, by the name of *Serapis*; who is supposed to be emblematical of the sun, during a particular period of his annual progress. They likewise worshipped the moon, under the

name of *Isis*, a word, which in the Egyptian language, signifies *The cause of abundance*.

I have already informed you, that they ranked the *Nile*, a river to which they were so much indebted, among their gods.

Apis, or the sacred ox, was worshipped by them with great solemnity. Many kings and princes, among whom was Alexander, did not disdain to offer sacrifices to this deified animal.

There was another symbolical deity of the Egyptians, to which they gave the name of *Anubis*.—His statue bore the head of a dog; and that animal, from being his living image, was consecrated to him.—Anubis had his temples and his priests; and a city was built in honour of him.—He was considered as the companion of *Osiris* and of *Isis*.

They

They likewise acknowledged an evil being, whom they denominated *Typhon*. The Greek poets, in their allegorical way, mention this imaginary being as one of the giants which waged war against the gods.—Jupiter is said to have struck him with a thunder-bolt, and buried him under Mount *Ætna*; ever since which, that mountain has vomited forth flames.

All these deities appear to have been only symbolical images, invented by astronomers, to express with the greater force upon the senses their discoveries. And the people being accustomed to see these representations in the temples, which were at that time the depositories of science, adored them as deities. The priests took advantage of this ignorance, and as it promoted their interest, made the worship of them a part of their religion.

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I must

I must not forget to mention to you a personage, whose name has been celebrated by a great number of writers, and that is the famous *Trismegistus*, to whom the invention of all arts and sciences is imputed. He was known to the Greeks by the name of *Hermes* or *Mercury*, and worshipped by them.—The ancient Egyptians called this symbolical divinity, *Thoth*. But whether the whole of the knowledge ascribed to *Trismegistus* centered in him, or may be attributed to the wise men in general of those ages, is not at this distant period to be known.

I shall next speak of the government of the Egyptians; a topic with which the northern nations are but little acquainted. For my own part, I acknowledge, Charles, that before I visited the country, I entertained a very different idea of it, from what I now do.—Without going back to the times of the
Pharaohs

Pharaohs and the Ptolemies, I shall content myself with beginning from the æra in which the Arabs got possession of it.

From the commencement of the sixth century, to the middle of the thirteenth, Egypt constituted a part of the extensive empire of the Caliphs of Bagdad. The renowned Haroun-al-Reschid, of whom mention is so frequently made in the Arabian Night's Entertainment, the Persian Tales, and other works of that kind, was one of these. During this period, it was governed by Vice Roys or Viziers, many of whom ruled the natives with a rod of iron.

For a part of this time, it was the possession of a descendant of the *Fatimite* Caliphs, who reigned in Africa towards the western parts of Egypt. This king, whose name was Moaz, having conquered it by his generals, made it the feat of his empire, and his posterity governed it till the year 1189.

Salah Eddin, a warlike prince, then gained possession of it, and held it till the year 1250, when the *Babarite* Mamalukes, a people of Turkish origin, murdered the reigning Sovereign, and acquired possession of it; and ever since that event, Egypt has groaned under a foreign yoke.

The *Babarite* Mamalukes governed it till the middle of the fourteenth century, when they were dethroned by the *Circassian* Mamalukes. This race kept possession of it without altering the form of government established by the Baharites, till Selim, emperor of the Turks, made a conquest of it. Unable to resist the mighty armies of this powerful prince, they were at length, after many bloody battles, obliged to yield to his sway. They, however, still maintained so formidable an appearance, that the Emperor found himself necessitated to grant them such privileges,

leges, as allowed them nearly the same degree of power they possessed before.

In consequence of this regulation, the Egyptian form of government is now become a mixture of monarchy and aristocracy; the power being lodged in the hands of a Viceroy appointed by the Turkish emperor, and twenty-four Sangiaks or Beys.

The Sangiaks or Beys are chosen from among the Mamalukes, and none but these strangers can obtain the title of Bey, or fill the posts of government. It is here become necessary that I should explain to you what the *Mamalukes* are. In Europe, I know, they are usually considered as slaves; but I assure you they are of a far superior nature, though they are at first purchased as slaves are.

They consist of children, which are carried off by merchants, or by robbers, from Georgia, Circassia, Natolia, &c. These being taken to the capital, Grand

Cairo, they are there purchased by the grandees, who have arrived at their present state of eminence from the same origin, and they are brought up by them in their own families. As the young captives are chiefly born of Christian parents, their purchasers force them to embrace the Mahometan religion, and to be circumcised. They are then instructed in the military sciences, and the laws of the country ; in which they usually make great proficiency. During this, they pass successively through the different degrees of the household of the Beys, till they have attained the post of *Cachef*, or Lieutenant of the Bey. At this period they are appointed to the government of the towns which are dependent on their patron, and are allowed to purchase Mamalukes, and rear them in the same manner as they themselves have been. In these they find their future companions and adherents.

From

From this station, if their merit and interest co-operate, they are advanced to the dignity of Bey, and obtain a seat among the twenty-four members of the Divan, or council of the republic. This elevation, however, does not, in general, so far intoxicate them as to make them consider themselves as independent of their patron ; they still look upon him as their master, and retain for him the profoundest submission.

The viceroy, or Pacha appointed by the Turkish government, enjoys here but an ideal consequence. He is deposed and sent away with disgrace, whenever he dares to oppose the designs of the most powerful Sangiaks. If, however, he is possessed of policy enough to sow dissensions among the Beys, he profits by their ambition, and makes an addition to the emoluments of his place. So that, if he can but conduct himself so as to enjoy his sta-

tion for a few years, he returns to Constantinople, possessed of immense riches.

If the powerful Beys are inimical to the representative of the Grand Seignior, they not only oblige him to make an abrupt departure, but having examined into his administration, which they are sure to condemn, they strip him of the wealth he has acquired, and divide it among themselves. They generally content themselves with doing this, without taking his life.

The Beys elect from among their number a head, to whom they give the name of *Scheik Elbalad*, which means in the Egyptian language, *the Old of the Country*. He is considered as their representative, and the chief of the republic. The second in dignity is termed the *Emir Hajji*; that is, *the Prince of the Caravan*. This officer, as before observed, has the command of the caravans, a place of great importance. The
Turkish

Turkish Pacha retains the nominal power of confirming these two in their offices.

As for the people, they are in a state little better than that of slavery. The Beys are possessed of the powers of levying arbitrary tributes; and being subject to no controul, they not unfrequently abuse that power, and exercise every species of tyranny.

There are, however, now and then exceptions to this rule. The most singular of these exceptions is that of the late *Ali Bey*, whose name you must often have read of in the newspapers. As you cannot be acquainted with the history of this deservedly celebrated person, I shall give you such a sketch of it as I was able to pick up while in Egypt.

I have already informed you that all the Beys or Sangiaks are chosen from among the Mamalukes; young men who,

who, as before observed, have been kidnapped from other countries, and have been instructed in every needful art and accomplishment, avowedly for this purpose. Consequently the Egyptians are never ruled by a native. So punctual are they in the observance of this regulation, that the son of a Bey never succeeds to the station of his father. He is not, however, without a handsome provision. The Divan take care of this point, and give him the title of *Ebn El-balad*; Child of the Country.

Ali was the son of a Greek priest of Natolia, whose family was one of the most considerable in that province. He was born about the year 1728; and being designed by his father to succeed him in his dignity, no pains were spared in his education. He continued under the protection of his parent, and amidst his friends, till he had attained his thirteenth year. When being one day hunt-

hunting, together with several of his young companions, they were all seized by a band of robbers, and carried off.

Jouseph, for that was Ali's name while a Christian, was taken to Grand Cairo, and there disposed of to *Ibrahim Kiaia*, the lieutenant of the janizaries, by whom he was named Ali, and qualified in every respect for becoming a Mameluke.

The young Greek deplored the loss of his liberty for a considerable time; but at length, the kind treatment he received from his patron,—the natural vivacity of his mind,—the inspirations of vanity at the flattering prospects that lay before him,—together with the example of his companions,—all co-operated to make him resign himself to his fate.

It was not long before he exceeded all his competitors in every exercise and branch of knowledge requisite to his

his station; and he thereby gained the first place in his master's favour. To this his graceful person and manners did not a little contribute; and he passed through the different departments of Ibrahim's household so rapidly, that at the age of two and twenty, (a much earlier age than usual,) he was created by him his *Cachef*, or lieutenant. And he not only thus acquired the favour of his patron, but of the Pacha, or Turkish Viceroy, who happened to be a worthy character.

The foundation of Ali's future greatness was now laid. His patron being chosen *Emir Hajji*, he took him with him to escort the pilgrims. During the journey, Ali gave so many proofs of intrepidity and conduct, in several encounters with the Arabs, that immediately after his return, as a reward for his services, he was, through the interest of his master, chosen one of the twenty-four Beys, and took his seat in the divan.

The

The same talents that had raised him to the dignity of a Sangiak, after a time, acquired for him that of *Schiek Elbalad*.—In the year 1763, he attained this first dignity of the republic.—It became to him, however, a dangerous station. — The fortune of this great man underwent from henceforward various revolutions.—The Beys being generally of a restless and ambitious disposition, they form themselves into parties, and the most powerful frequently put their rivals to flight, or to death.

This was now the case with Ali. Not long after his elevation to the premiership of the Beys, we see him obliged to relinquish both his post, and the kingdom, and take refuge with *Sheik Daber*, prince of St. John de Acre, in Syria.—A reverse of fortune, not long after, restores him to his former situation.—But his tranquility is of no long duration.—The hatred of his opponents

ponents breaking out afresh, he narrowly escapes with his life, into Arabia Felix; and from thence again finds a refuge with his truly respectable and venerable friend *Sbeik Daber*.

Thus fluctuating was his fortune, till the year 1766, when he found means to return once more to Grand Cairo; and by timely avenging himself of the principal of his persecutors, he enjoyed an uninterrupted tranquility, for the space of six years.—During this period, he took every prudential step to secure a continuance of peace, and to promote the welfare of his country.

By his kind and humane behaviour towards his Mamalukes, and dependants of every rank, he obtained their affection and support.—By the rigour of his discipline, he made the Egyptian troops good soldiers.—He attacked the roving parties of Arabs, who were continually committing ravages on his frontiers,

frontiers, and obliged them to take refuge in the centre of their impenetrable sands.—He encouraged commerce and agriculture.—And by an impartial administration of justice, gained the universal love of his people, and secured to them a scene of prosperity they had never before enjoyed.

But what is most extraordinary, Ali effected the latter by the same method our great Alfred pursued for the internal regulation of his kingdom.—He made, as our Saxon prince did before him, the principal persons in every town and village responsible for the crimes or misdemeanours of any of the inhabitants within their district; inflicting punishment on them, until the real perpetrators were brought to justice. A proof, Charles, that it is not for want of possibility, but of a due exertion in government, that this salutary and effi-

cacious

cacious plan, or somewhat similar, is not re-established in Great Britain.

Such was the conduct of that great and politic prince, Ali Bey ; and so sensible are the Egyptians at this time of his merit, and so great is their veneration for his name, that they never mention it without the highest respect, and tokens of regret for his loss.

I must not omit one trait of his character, which no less tends to dignify it, and to evince his moderation and sensibility, than any of the foregoing circumstances.—He had purchased a Russian slave, that was uncommonly beautiful ; and who, at the same time, was endowed with a greatness of soul that rendered her superior to her situation.—Ali would have availed himself of the right which her state entitled him to. She, however, nobly withstood all his attempts. She was neither to be overawed by his power, nor seduced by his presents.—

Superior

Superior to most of her sex in dignity of sentiment, the splendour by which she saw him surrounded lost its usual efficacy.

Ali could not long be insensible to an elevation of mind so congenial to his own.—A tenderness seldom known to those who consider women as subservient to their will, crept into his heart.—He wooed her with all the respectful assiduity of a lover;—and offered to make her his wife, if she would consent to renounce the Christian religion.

Though Maria (that was the fair slave's name) could not but entertain some tender sentiments for a person whose rank, character, and accomplishments, so justly merited a return of love, yet so great was her attachment to the religion of her ancestors that she refused even those terms. At length, unable any longer to resist the impulse of that love and esteem he entertained for the amiable captive,

Ali

Ali gave her his hand, on condition that she would not make her religion known by an open profession of it. From the moment he was united to her he treated her with the most affectionate attention, and during the remainder of his life had no other wife.

The respect paid by Ali to his aged parent, is no less worthy of record. He no sooner found himself firmly seated in his government, than he sent to Nantolia for him; and upon his arrival showed him all those public testimonies of duty and gratitude his elevated situation allowed him to do. As soon as Ali saw his father approach, he dismounted from his horse, threw himself at his feet, and bathed them with his tears. Nor, was the venerable priest less affected.

After a stay of several months, Ali at his father's request, sent him back to his native country, loaded with presents.

At

At the expiration of six years Ali experienced, once more, the caprice of fortune. During the plenitude of his power he had raised one of his Mamalukes, named *Mahomed Abou-Dabah*, to the rank of Bey. And in order to secure his gratitude and adherence, he showered innumerable favours on him. As the greatest proof of his regard he bestowed upon him in marriage a sister, whom his father had brought with him from Natolia, and had left, at Ali's request, behind him.

His liberality was, however, bestowed upon a person totally unworthy of it. Mahomed, lost to every incitement but those of ambition and avarice, joined himself secretly with the enemies of Ali; and, through a long train of treacherous actions, were the Egyptians, at length, deprived by him of their best friend and benefactor.

After

After several revolutions, which I have not opportunity to enumerate, Ali was for the last time, driven from his capital by the treacherous *Abou Dabab*, in the year 1773 ; and in a battle fought on the 13th of April of that year, during which he performed prodigies of valour, was mortally wounded.

Thus perished, in the 45th year of his age, this great man ; whose merits could not secure him from those revolutions to which the government of Egypt is so subject.

The person of Ali was of the middle size ; his carriage graceful and noble ; and there was an inexpressible fire in his eyes.—His natural courage was insurmountable ;—his genius was elevated ;—and, contrary to the usual habits of the Turks, which prevents their holding communication with strangers, Ali esteemed and rewarded those whose talents recommended them to his notice.

I must

I must not omit to inform you that the Russians, during their late war with the Turks, missed an opportunity of securing to themselves in Ali Bey a powerful ally. At the time of one of his expulsions into Syria, it is said, he made advances to the Russian admiral in the Levant, and proposed to him a plan of alliance that would probably have been attended with very great advantages to both. It might have enabled Ali to triumph over his opponents, and to have got himself crowned king of Egypt, an elevation to which it is said he aspired;—and on the other hand, had he succeeded in the attempt, he would probably have put the Russians in possession of some ports in the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, that would have secured to them the commerce of the east. — The whole, however, was rendered abortive by the inconsiderable aid they furnished Ali with.—Whether this arose from an ill

I

timed

timed parsimony on the part of the Russians, or from their want of confidence in the project, I will not pretend to say.

Thus, Charles, have I given you a concise account of the observations I made, and the information I acquired, during my stay in Egypt.—The time of my continuance in that country would not admit of very extensive enquiries.—The pith and marrow, however, of what intelligence I did obtain, I have sent unto you ;—and shall esteem myself in some measure repaid for the pains it cost me, if it affords you a few hours amusement.

J. N. WINDHAM.

L E T T E R LXIV.

MISS MAITLAND TO MRS. SELWYN.

Belle Farm, Jan. 10, 1780.

CLAYTON and his fair spouse have taken their departure for London; at once to my regret and ease. This might appear

appear a paradox to you, my dear Eliza; but it will cease to be so, when I explain myself.

Having so long been accustomed to have Clayton near me, (once, alas! upon a footing that rendered him the joy of my heart, and the delight of my eyes,) I cannot, without regret, think of his being removed to such a distance from me;—even though another's. While he continued at Woodland Cot, I could daily hear of his welfare, and participate in his concerns:—I could joy in his joy, and grieve when he grieved.—But, now such a track of land lies between us, I can no longer enjoy this felicity.

What do you mean, say you, by their removal contributing to your *ease*?—When it is considered that one of the parties is a successful rival, and triumphing in that success, no farther explanation I think will be needful.

From the symptoms given by that lady, since her marriage, of an innate propensity to dissipation and extravagance, as already hinted to you, Eliza, I have too much reason to fear that the sunshine of my Clayton's days will ere long be overcast. Should not Lord G. fulfil his promises to him, and that in an ample manner, it will not be in his power to keep pace with her expence. What then must be the consequence! The bare apprehension distracts me!— I will therefore drop the painful anticipation.

Have you no friend in London, Eliza, to whom you can apply for intelligence relative to their mode of living, &c.? If you know of any one, pray write to them, in order to ease the anxiety, which already begins to rack my mind, and which, added to my concern for my father, may prove too much to be borne.

The

The dear man, whose name I have just mentioned, seems to approach the verge of life very rapidly.—The disappointment he has experienced preys upon his mind; and not unfrequently raises emotions in it, that must at length prove destructive to his health. My mother likewise breaks apace, so that it may not be long before I am left quite destitute of parental tenderness.

As this subject, like the former, will not bear anticipation, and I seem to write in too gloomy a strain to give you any satisfaction, I will conclude with repeating the request I have just made, as it lies nearest my heart, and requires the most immediate attention.

Remember me, my dear Eliza, most kindly to Mr. S. and believe me to be

Yours sincerely,

HARRIET MAITLAND.

LETTER LXV.

MRS. SELWYN TO MISS MAITLAND.

Jan. 20th, 1780.

EVER ready, my dear Harriet, to gratify your inclinations as far as lies in my power, I have written to a friend in London, on whose goodness I think I can so far rely, as to trouble her with the commission you wish me to get executed.

The lady to whom I have written upon this occasion, is a Mrs. Gascoigne, the widow of — Gascoigne, Esq. who was resident many years abroad in a public employ.—She is a very intelligent woman, perfectly acquainted with genteel life;—and well known in the fashionable circle.—She spent a part of last summer with a relation of her's in our neighbourhood, and her politeness and affability attracting our notice, a
cordial

cordial intimacy took place between us. At parting, she solicited a continuance of our friendship, and told us she should be always ready to render us any services in London. In my letter I have given her a short history of the persons whose conduct you would wish her to notice, together with such plausible reasons for my curiosity, as must prevent any suspicion from falling on you.

As soon as I receive her letters, and have perused them, I will forward them to you, and shall wish for a return of your sentiments upon them.

In the mean time let me caution you, Harriet, against interesting yourself too susceptible in the concerns of a man, of whose ever being any thing beyond the object of your friendship and goodwill, there is at present very little probability.

Learn, my love, to think with Mr. Pope, "that whatever is, is right.—"

that is, resign your will to the will of that Power without whose permission not a sparrow falls to the ground. At present, the prospect before you is not of the most pleasing kind; but youth and health may brighten it again, or place it in another point of view, that may prove equally as pleasing.

We are sorry to hear of the decaying state of both your parents. But as it is the common lot, this also must be submitted to. As the King says to Hamlet,

'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature,
To give these mourning duties to your father;
But you must know, your father lost a father,
That father his, and the survivor bound,
In filial obligation for some term
To do obsequious sorrow.

That you may be supported under your present trials, and, in due time relieved from them, sincerely prays,

Dear Harriet,

Your affectionate friend,

ELIZA SELWYN.

LETTER

LETTER LXVI.

MRS. CLAYTON JUN. TO MISS LASCELLES.

London, Jan. 29, 1780.

ALL alive, and happy, Anna!—
London is indeed the only place,
where beauty can receive due homage!
—How could I bury mine so long in
the country!—At the Opera—at the
Playhouse—at Ranelagh—at public or
private concerts.—In short, wheresoever
she appears, every eye is turned towards
your delighted friend with marks of su-
preme admiration.

Let this suffice to shew you, Anna,
how well satisfied I am with leaving York-
shire.—Could you have thought it,
Anna? but I find I can indulge myself in
greater freedoms, as Mrs. Clayton, than
I could have done had I remained Miss
Burrell. — So far have French cus-

toms obtained an establishment in England.

We live in style, I assure you, Anna; Lord G. having renewed his promise to Clayton, that he shall be placed in a situation, which will enable him to support it, upon the first vacancy that happens. We are at present only in lodgings, but we have agreed for a handsome house in Upper Brook-street.

Do you know Lord G. Anna?—He is really a charming man!—Though upwards of fifty, he has all the fire and vivacity of a boy of fifteen.—At the same time he is so tender, so engaging, and says such civil things of one, in so polite a manner, that it is impossible to help liking him.—I am happy beyond expression in his acquaintance, and have already chosen him for my cicisbeo.

Clayton sometimes looks a little serious at the attention shown me by his lordship; but as his every hope depends

pend upon the favor of his patron, whatever his thoughts may be, he is too prudent to give utterance to them.

I have a number of admirers besides his lordship, Anna, with whose sighs and vows I amuse myself as usual.—I always told you I should be *myself* again, as soon as the novelty of my new engagement wore off a little.

“Your chair is ready, Madam.”—

“Very well, I come.” My chair being waiting to carry me to Lady W—’s rout, I have only time to add, my dear Anna, that from the short sketch above given, you will be able to form some idea of the present happy situation of your friend.—But even in the midst of these vivacious scenes, I can subscribe myself, with as much sincerity as ever,

Your affectionate friend,

ARABELLA CLAYTON.

P. S.

P. S. Pray let me have the pleasure of hearing from you as usual.

LETTER LXVII.

MRS. GASCOIGNE TO MRS. SELWYN.

London, February 3d, 1780.

DEAR MADAM,

YOU have made me quite happy by putting it in my power to render you any service here. Good manners required that I should have acknowledged before this, the receipt of your letter; but as I could not sooner execute any part of the commission you have been pleased to honor me with, I thought you would more approve of my postponing it till I had.

I have met with the persons you point out, upon several of my visits, both in private families and public places. I have likewise made such enquiries relative

rive to them, and that in such a manner, as I flatter myself, Madam, will not prove unacceptable to you.

Mr. Clayton, I find, lives in a genteel stile.—He has just taken a house near Grosvenor-square, which from its size will require many domestics, and is befitting a man of fortune.—What his means are to support all this, you best know. It is said here, that his chief dependence is on Lord G.

The beauty of Mrs. Clayton is deservedly acknowledged in every circle.—She has many admirers.—Among these Lord G. appears the most assiduous. And as his lordship is known to be a man of avowed gallantry, conclusions, not very favourable to the lady's character, are foreboded from the intimacy.—His lordship has sometimes been known to bestow his patronage, &c. when true generosity has not been the source from which it has flowed.—The lady's prudence

dence will, however, I hope, defeat his lordship's purposes, and enable her to set at defiance the tongue of slander.

Such, Madam, has been the commencement of my enquiries. With the same attention, shall I endeavour to proceed in the execution of my commission, informing you from time to time, as circumstances may arise, of the progress I shall make.

Please to present my best compliments to Mr. Selwyn, and be assured, my dear Madam, that I shall embrace with the greatest pleasure, every opportunity of proving myself,

Your obedient

humble servant,

JANE GASCOIGNE.

LETTER

LETTER LXVIII.

MRS. SELWYN TO MISS MAITLAND.

Feb. 7th, 1780.

DEAR HARRIET,

INCLOSED you have the first fruits of my correspondence with Mrs. Gascoigne.—You will see by it that we could not have employed a more able negociator.—I will leave you to draw your own conclusions from the information sent us; only repeating what I have more than once remarked to you, that the union between those who are become the subject of our enquiries, as it was founded on passion, and brought about by the forfeiture of honour, cannot be productive of happiness.

Yours in haste,

ELIZA SELWYN.

LETTER.

LETTER LXIX.

MISS MAITLAND TO MRS. SELWYN.

Belle Farm, Feb. 10th, 1780.

I See, and see with sorrow, Eliza, that your prognostications are too likely to be verified.—Alas, poor Clayton!—What will vermil-tinctured lips, love-darting eyes, or golden tresses, avail, when the derangement of thy fortune shall have robbed thee of thy peace of mind!

I am led to this conclusion, at so early a period, from the well known unsubstantiality of courtier's promises.—And even should his lordship bestow the promised boon, it must be no inconsiderable addition to Clayton's present income, that will enable him to support the expensive stile of living he is about to enter into.—Though I agree with you, Eliza, in the probable consequences of their union; yet, for his sake,
 nay,

may, for *both their sakes*, do I sincerely deprecate them.

But of this no more at present.—A concern, that ought to be esteemed by me of much greater importance, claims my attention.—A father, hastening apace towards the close of his existence, demands every thought.—Excuse me, therefore, my dear Eliza, if I only add, that I am, with true respect,

Your ever affectionate friend,

H. MAITLAND.

LETTER LXX.*

MR. CLAYTON TO J. N. WINDHAM,
Esq,

London, Dec. 14, 1780.

HOW do I regret thy absence, Windham, at a time when the future happiness of thy friend is at stake!—

Thy

* Many of the letters between this and the preceding being lost or mislaid, a chasm in the correspondence

Thy sudden departure for Edinburgh has deprived me of that advice which would be of infinite service to me.

Having hitherto reposed in thy friendly bosom, all my secret sighs, it will be unnecessary to repeat what you have so often heard me lament.—That turn for expence and dissipation, and that extreme fondness for admiration, in the woman I love, which has caused me so much pain, have not in the least decreased since you left us.

The consequence has been, that I have made repeated applications to my mother for pecuniary assistance, with promises of repayment, when I am in possession of my expected appointment. But when that will be, Heaven only knows.

Art thou not surprized, Jack, at his Lordship's neglect in this point?—Se-

spendence of several months here takes place, but without any apparent interruption to the history.

veral

veral places, that would have suited me, and to the official duties of which I flatter myself I should have been equal, have been vacant since my coming to town; and I am still unprovided for.

To add to the difficulties I labour under through this inattention, his Lordship seems to approve of my manner of living, and by his frequent visits increases my expence; notwithstanding he must know that my own fortune is too circumscribed to afford it.

How is all this to be accounted for, think ye?—His Lordship either must not have the interest he boasts of; or must want inclination to serve me;—or must have some latent views which I cannot as yet discover.—Whatever the cause may be, the effects are sure.—

His Lordship's assiduous attendance upon my wife, cannot fail to excite also some uneasiness in my mind.—And could I persuade myself that the liking
(to

(to call it by no warmer a name) she once entertained for me was totally obliterated by her love of admiration, I should be more unhappy about it than I am.—Well as I love her, and strongly as my heart pleads in her favour, I cannot suppress the jealous suggestions, which will now and then arise.

It has been hinted to me, that encouraged by Lord G. she is lately grown fond of play.—Her increased demands for money seem to confirm this.—Good Heaven! the more I reflect the more am I tortured.—Was it to be done, without giving offence to his Lordship, and thereby annihilating all my expectations from him, I would let my house, and retire once more to the peaceful glades of Woodland Cot.—But that must not be.—I have launched my bark upon the dangerous stream, and must continue in her whether she sinks or swims.

Where

Where are now those dreams of ecstasy and unceasing joy, which I fancied to be the sure attendants on the possession of beauty!—Would an union with Harriet Maitland have been productive of such a retrospection?—No!—Her prudence, oeconomy, good sense, and dignity of sentiment, joined to charms not to be despised but by such a fickle wretch as me, would have ensured me real and undecreasing happiness.—But her alas! I could reject!

I dare not indulge the thought.—So will bid thee adieu, before I begin to rave, on a different account from what I used to do.—Write me soon, and believe me to be,

Dear Windham,

Thy sincere, though much altered friend,

C. CLAYTON.

P. S. Lord G. having introduced me a few nights ago to a club of Choice Spirits, to them will I fly for relief.

L E T-

LETTER LXXI.

MISS MAITLAND TO MRS. SELWYN.

Belle Farm, Dec. 28, 1780.

WHAT a constant fluctuation is there, my dear Eliza, in the affairs of this world!—No sooner is the mind depressed by one unfortunate event, than it is elevated by another of a more pleasing cast.—The successions of grief to joy, or of joy to grief, are sometimes unaccountably strange, and wonderful.

Now, Eliza, for an application of these reflections. — I have scarcely dried up my tears for the loss of my father and mother, than the news of the death of another relation reaches me, which, if it excites a tear, it must be a tear of joy.

You may remember to have heard me mention, that an only brother of my
mo-

mother's had, in early life, gone to the West Indies; where, by a train of successful circumstances, he acquired a very considerable fortune. Having taken offence at something or other, when he first went abroad, he determined to hold no communication with his family; and consequently no correspondence was ever kept up between them.

The last account we received of him, which came always through another quarter, was, that he had buried his wife, and all his children, and was himself in an ill state of health. Knowing the coolness that had subsisted between him and my mother, I never entertained a hope of reaping any benefit from his death; guess therefore at my surprize, Eliza, on receiving yesterday a letter from a gentleman at Jamaica, directed for my late mother, informing her that her brother had, a few days before, departed

parted this life, after having made a will, by which he had left her his sole executrix; and in which he had expressed his compunction at living so long in a state of estrangement from her.—The gentleman adds, that my uncle's property in estates and personal effects, will not amount to less than *fifty thousand pounds*; which he shall wait her commands how to dispose of. My mother having outlived all the other branches of her family, the whole devolves to me as her only representative.

How unexpected and how pleasing, Eliza!—Much as I have boasted of my equanimity, it is with difficulty I can contain my joy within the bounds I wish to do.—But mark me, Eliza; it is not solely upon my own account that I thus rejoice.—The happiness of another excites these chearful ideas.—Views open upon my mind, which I have hitherto never dared to indulge.—I will make him

him happy, if it be in the power of money to do it.—But no more of this at present.

You may spare yourself the trouble of sending me your congratulations, Eliza, as I purpose being with you in two or three days, at once to pour into your friendly bosom the overflowing of my joy, and at the same time to beg my dear Mr. Selwyn's advice on the disposal of the property thus unexpectedly left me.—So you see, that whether impelled by grief, pleasure, or interest, I fly to your faithful arms for comfort, participation, or advice.

HARRIET MAITLAND.

LETTER LXXII.

MRS. GASCOIGNE TO MRS. SELWYN.

London, Jan. 25, 1781.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I INFORMED you in my last of the progressive steps by which the persons whose conduct you wish me to ob-

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serve,

serve, are hastening to ruin—They have at length reached the edge of the precipice, and one of them has, I fear, taken the irretrievable leap, and bid adieu to peace.

I mentioned to you, that their wily old patron, taking advantage of Mrs. C.'s inexperience, had endeavoured to instil into her mind a love of play, and had but too well succeeded. This propensity, aided by her natural love of admiration, and desire of making new conquests, has enabled his lordship to execute the whole of his plan.

He introduced her to different tables, and as she lost, supplied her from time to time with considerable sums.—Unwilling that her imprudence should come to the knowledge of her husband, which his lordship artfully now and then hinted the necessity of, and her continued ill success putting it more and more out of her power to repay his lord-

lordship by any other means, her honour is said to have become the sacrifice. In order to enjoy the fruits of his artifices with the greater freedom, he has introduced Mr. C. who detests play, to a set of *Box Events*, among whom most of his evenings are spent. And the once happy pair, returning home at no very early hour, generally meet with much less rapture than they used to do.

This appears to be the present state of things in Upper Brook street. You may perhaps wonder, my dear Madam, at my being able to obtain such minute intelligence respecting them; but much may be done by assiduity, and, now and then, making use of that golden key, which introduces into the most secret recesses.

What will be the result of all this I cannot foresee.—There, however, does not at present appear to be the most distant prospect of their being extricated

out of the difficulties into which imprudence has plunged them;—Lord G. having as yet done nothing for them, and I fear never will.—As fresh circumstances arise, I will inform you of them, with the same minuteness and punctuality I have hitherto done.—And remain, with usual respects,

Dear Madam,

Your sincere friend,

and humble servant,

JANE GASCOIGNE.

LETTER LXXIII.

MR. WINDHAM TO CHARLES CLAYTON,
ESQUIRE.

Edinburgh, Jan. 10, 1781.

INDEED, my dear Charles, I am sorry for thee;—very sorry;—but I know not what to advise, by way of extricating thee from thy present dilemma.

lemma.—Thou hast applied to me before for consolation in thy troubles; and hast found me to be but a sad sort of comforter.—So all that I can do, is to wish thee well through it. Perhaps Dame Fortune may be more favourable than you expect, and just as you begin to despair, the prospect may brighten upon you.—I wish my means were equal to my inclinations; you should not long be dependant on that old libidinous harpy.—I have more than once given you my sentiments of him, and his offered patronage; and if you do not already coincide with me in them, I think you soon will.

Having thus said all I can, (and that I acknowledge to be very little to the purpose,) on thy affairs, I will change the subject, and put in a word or two relative to my own. You must know then, my good friend, that somehow or somehow, I

quit

K 3

seem

seem to be got into that road. I have
so often protested I would never put my
foot into, unless, per chance, I might be
so blinded by dotage, as to blunder into
it, towards the conclusion of my days.

There is a young lady upon a visit
whence I am, who, although she is nei-
ther possessed of accomplishments,
beauty, nor fortune, out of the common
line; (and all these, thou mayst recol-
lect, I have ever declared, the person whom
I married should possess in a *superlative*
degree,) has so fascinated me, that I
know not how it is, but things are pend-
ing in a strange manner, and even with-
out my consent or concurrence, that
wayward, and I'll be sworn, I
We are often thrown into situations,
where a woman, who makes the least
pretension to politeness, cannot help
saying civil things to a lady.—
These civil things are construed, I see,
into meanings which favour of court-
ship,

ship, and accepted as such.—Good manners will not permit me to say that such is not my meaning;—and thus am I plunging every hour, deeper and deeper in the miry road of matrimony.

As *Medea* exclaims, so may I; *Video, meliora proboque, deteriora sequor*; or in other words, though I am persuaded I cannot be happier than I am in my present state of freedom, yet I am running my head, *volens volens*, into the nuptial noose.—And this, from a train of circumstances, which unavoidably arise.—Or rather, according to my old doctrine, such being the decrees of Madam Destiny, I am in a fair way of becoming the husband of Lady Wilhelmina Grant.

Having thus given thee, Charles, the first scene of the first act of a new play, of which I have involuntarily commenced one of the *dramatis personæ*, I will proceed with the subsequent scenes

in due time. Whether it will prove a comedy or tragedy, I know not as yet. If the foregoing sketch serves to alleviate for a few minutes thy perplexities, it will afford some satisfaction to thy friend,

J. N. WINDHAM.

LETTER LXXIV.

MISS MAITLAND TO MRS. SELWYN.

Belle Farm, Feb. 10th, 1781.

INEXPRESSIBLE, my dear Eliza, are the tortures Mrs. Gascoigne's last letter has excited in my mind.—To what a distressful state must Clayton be reduced!—Not only embarrassed in his circumstances, perhaps, without a prospect of relief, but disappointed in his expectations of that happiness he made sure of finding in an union with so fine a woman.

Shall

— Shall I hesitate a moment to alleviate as much as lies in my power these embarrassments!—Can I apply a part of my newly acquired fortune to a better purpose!—To do this, has been my determination ever since it came into my possession.—But, as I know his delicacy in this point, it must be done through the medium of his mother.—I will consult her upon the occasion, and if she does not readily enter into my views, I will set out for London, and by some means or other, make him easy with regard to pecuniary matters.

Oh! that I could also restore to him what is infinitely more valuable;—that honour which an imprudent woman has blasted, and with it that peace of mind, which the bare suspicion of her infidelity must have banished from his bosom!—I will not even withhold my services from the fair cause, should there

appeal to be the least probability of re-
 claiming her, or you will see as much as
 to We see confirmed in the instance be-
 fore us, Eliza, the maxim you hold to
 be incontrovertible, *that no union between
 the sexes, can be productive of real and last-
 ing happiness, but such as has within and true
 love for its basis.* I—Romantic as the foregoing determi-
 nations may seem, you shall see, Eliza,
 that I have resolution enough to put
 them in practice. — And as they at pre-
 sent engross the whole of my attention,
 I will go over to Woodlands, to-
 day afternoon, in order to fix on some plan.
 The result of our conference, and the
 steps I take in consequence of it, you
 shall be informed of, ere long, till when
 I remain

Your ever affectionate,

H. MAITLAND.

LETTER

LETTER LXXV.

MRS. CLAYTON, JUN. TO MISS LASCELLES.

London, Feb. 12, 1781.

GOOD Heavens! my Anna, how shall I commit to paper even for your perusal, what my full heart would dictate!—Horror and dismay have overwhelmed my soul; and unless I can find ease from disclosing my situation to you, the only friend in whom I can confide, despair will, I fear, be the consequence.

I have been a dupe, my Anna, to the most wily of serpents.—My native coquetry has laid the foundation, and gaming has completed my ruin.—Like a poor fly, I thought I could flutter round the flame without danger;—but, in my giddy flights, I approached too near, scorched my wings, and fell.—

You have already been informed by me of the assiduous attention with which I thought myself honoured by Lord G. and, to my shame I say it, of the avowed complacency with which I received his devoirs, notwithstanding my being the wife of another.

But I have not acquainted you, my Anna, with the worst part of the story. This I will now do, but under the seal of the most profound secrecy.—Trust not the revealing it even to chance.—As soon as you have read the fatal scrole, burn it.—By the precautions taken, my imprudence may remain undiscovered here; be you therefore equally cautious.

As the subject is a disagreeable one, I will relate the circumstances of it to you, my dear Anna, in as few words as possible.

His lordship, who I find is a veteran in intrigue, not only urged his suit in the most artful and insinuating manner, but

but had recourse to another step to secure his conquest. He introduced me to some private tables, and there urged me to play.—Being a novice, I lost, as you may suppose.—In endeavouring to retrieve these losses, my debts of honour increased.—Knowing it would be in vain to apply to Clayton, who was already too much embarrassed, for the payment of them, and dreading his reproaches, I fell unwittingly into the snare his lordship had laid for me, and found myself obliged to accept of his offers of assistance.

My obligations to him, at length, amounted to such a sum, that there was no other alternative left, than either to disclose my imprudence to my husband, or to repay his lordship, I blush to say how.—As some extenuation of my fault, let me add, that it was not till after much remorse on my side, and many arti-

artifices on that of his lordship, that I submitted to do the latter. — You see, Anna, how one may go on from step to step.

And yet, I sometimes think, that I am too susceptible upon this occasion; and lay too much to heart a fashionable frailty, which many of my new acquaintance in high life would think nothing of. But I am not as yet blessed with their happy *bravura*. — On the contrary, whenever I happen to be alone with Clayton, which is not indeed so frequently as usual, my foolish heart is upon the point of betraying my secret, and I am about to disclose it to him, and to implore his forgiveness. — Prudence, however, has hitherto interposed in time, and saved me from the shame and disgrace. — But the alarms I am constantly under, lest he should by some means or other discover my infidelity, are not to be described.

Write to me, then, my dear Anna, and that soon; — and instead of reflecting upon

upon me for doing what cannot be un-
done; let me hear nothing from you but
what will tend to keep up the spirits of
-In Illw I—Your friend,

ARABELLA CLAYTON.

LETTER LXXVI.

MISS LASCELLES TO MRS. CLAYTON, JUN.
Feb. 20th, 1781.

OH, Bella! Bella!—Could I ever
have thought, that the innocent
coquetry I used to commend in you,
and that desire of making conquests,
so very allowable in a fine woman,
while single, would have carried you
beyond all bounds of prudence!

"Write you nothing but what will
tend to keep up your spirits!"—In-
deed, I cannot conform to this request,
Bella.—Your imprudence, in my opi-
nion, will not admit of extenuation,
nor is it entitled to the consolative balm
of friendship.

The readiness with which you have
disclosed the fatal secret to me, claims
some forbearance; but I should forfeit

all

all pretensions to the characters of a virtuous woman, or a faithful friend, if I hesitated a moment to speak my sentiments upon your conduct.—I will allow that it required no small share of fortitude to withstand the arts of so experienced a libertine; but why did you flutter round the flame at all?

Where was that love which led you to give your hand to Clayton, in preference to many wealthier suitors?—And how slightly must honour be impressed upon your mind!

I am so hurt at your letter, that I will not only burn it, as you request, but endeavour to forget the contents of it.

Only one thing now remains to be done, and that, if you value your future happiness, you will do.—Tear yourself away from the cursed place you are in, and the more baneful connections you have entered into.—Return to Yorkshire,

shire, there alone can you hope to find peace.—I know that Clayton loves you too well to deny you any request, especially a request that will promote his happiness as well as yours; for I am much mistaken, if he does not by this time, sorely repent of leaving the country.

Come then, my dear Bella, with all the expedition your entanglements will admit, and when you do come, and then only, be assured of all the comfort and consolation in the power of,

Your friend,

ANNA LASCELLES.

P. S. If you can mention it with any propriety to Mr. Clayton, you may tell him, that Squire Acres is lately returned from France, where he has sojourned ever since the fracas about you happened. He is indebted to that country for a wonderful reformation; not indeed in his manners, but in his dress

210 DONCASTER RACES.

dress and mien, being, as they tell me, a most consummate coxcomb.—Notwithstanding which, I still think him unworthy Clayton's notice.

LETTER LXXVII.

MISS MANTHAND TO MRS. SELWYN.

London, March 12, 1781.

HERE I am, my dear Eliza!—I have reached the scene of action,—and am deliberating upon the best method of carrying into execution the scheme that has brought me to town.

As I could not bring Mrs. Clayton, senior, although she has much distressed herself in order to support the extravagance of her son and daughter-in-law, to enter into my views for extricating them from their embarrassments;—and as I have the same reason to be-
lieve

lieve that any offers of assistance from me, *in propria persona*, would meet with the same reception from them; it has been agreed upon, in a consultation with Mrs. Gascoigne, that I shall assume the habit of a man, and under the form and title of Sir Harry Cloudefley, endeavour to commence an intimacy with one or both of them.

I am accordingly to be introduced this evening by the above lady (from whom your recommendatory letter procured me the most polite and friendly reception,) to Mrs. Martinett's rout, where there is a probability of my meeting with Mrs. Clayton. If I do, I shall make my first essay upon her;—but for the mode of doing it, must leave that to chance.

What think you, Eliza, of your friend's putting on the dress of a man, and strutting *en militaire*?—Love, we are told, has assumed many a shape, to

an-

answer his purposes; but never did he disguise himself, from so pure and disinterested a motive as mine. Why therefore should I hesitate a moment at making use of any mode, which affords a probability of my being able to show by it the fervent and unaltered state of my affection for Clayton, and my benevolent attention to the frailties of his wife?

You shall be duly informed, my dear Eliza, of the progress I make in this nouvelle adventure, as incidents arise; till when, I remain as affectionately
Yours as ever,

H. MAITLAND.

L E T T E R LXXVIII.

MISS MAITLAND TO MRS. SELWYN.

London, March 16, 1781.

MRS. Martinett, Eliza, is one of those members of the great circle who, while she takes care to support such an appearance as will entitle her
to

to move in that sphere, makes no scruple to administer *privately* to the vices or follies of her particular acquaintance, in order to increase an income, which would otherwise be too scanty to maintain her in the stile she lives.

Thus, she has a rout at her house once a week, which persons of both sexes frequent, in order to gratify their propensity to gaming. — And, at the same time, those among her more intimate acquaintance who wish to enjoy a *de te a te* with a favoured lover, without incurring scandal, may, through the mediation of this good lady, find their wishes accomplished. For these secret services suitable presents and other acknowledgements are made to her.

To the society at Mrs. Martinett's was I introduced by Mrs. Gascoigne; from whom I received the foregoing anecdotes. You will perhaps wonder, Eliza, that that lady should keep such company,

pany, and, by her presence there, give encouragement to such a woman.—But you must observe, that the private traits of Mrs. Martinett's character are known only to a few;—and as the greatest part of the company, who frequent her house, are persons of reputation, who assemble there, as I have before said, merely to enjoy the pleasures of the card table and play, she does not hesitate to go there now and then, that she may the more readily acquire the intelligence you wished for; relative to Mrs. Clayton, who has long been a select member.—And for the same purpose she carried me there.

Soon after I entered the room, I made my way to the table where Mrs. Clayton sat, and had the pleasure to observe that my figure and air caught her attention. For upon my word, Eliza, my new habit fits perfectly easy upon me, and my appearance is such, that

YNSQ

I have

I have already acquired the appellation of the *pretty fellow*.

I found her just rising from the table, and seemingly much chagrined at a run of ill luck. I addressed her with a *dé-gagé* air, paid some compliments to her beauty, and in a jocular manner, intreated her to give Fortune an opportunity of repaying her unkindness, telling her, at the same time, that I should esteem myself extremely happy to be permitted to be her banker.

Mrs. Clayton seemed struck at the singularity of the address, and accepting, with the same levity, my proposal, sat down again. When the company broke up, she found her winnings amount to a considerable sum, a moiety of which she offered to me; but, with my former gallantry, I refused the offer, begging her to consider the whole as her own. She at first made some hesitation at receiving a favour of that nature

nature from a stranger ; but I could perceive that she was not very much displeased either with the giver or the gift ; and after a few solicitations, put it again into her purse. My generosity, I likewise saw, did not pass unnoticed by the lady of the house, and it seemed to obtain for me her good opinion.

When the party broke up, I handed Mrs. Clayton to her chair ; and on taking leave, told her, I hoped to have the pleasure of meeting her there another evening, and proving to her again the genius of good fortune ; to which she returned a nod, accompanied with a smile, that, had I been a man, would have raised the tenderest emotions in my bosom.—My rival still retains that exquisite beauty she always possessed ; but her health seems to be much impaired since she came to town.—Late hours, and the anxiety attendant on gaming, have, I suppose, contributed to this.

When

When I returned to the room, Mrs. Martinett singled me out, and paid me some compliments on my gallant behaviour to Mrs. Clayton; telling me, at the same time, that she thought us the handsomest couple in the room. This affording me a good opportunity for making some enquiries, I hinted to her, that the lady's uncommon beauty having prejudiced me greatly in her favour, she would oblige me, by informing me of her name and connections.— Mrs. Martinett replied, in a whisper, that the present was not a proper time to enter upon a subject of this nature; but perhaps, as I had given such proofs of a liberal spirit, she might have no objection to do it upon some future occasion.

So you see, Eliza, that a kind of intimacy, in my assumed character, is already commenced between Mrs. Clayton and myself; and that things are in

a fair train for my obtaining a true state of her case, by which I shall be the better enabled to apply a remedy.

As for Clayton, I have not yet thrown myself in his way; nor shall I, till I see what is to be done with his lady.—Besides, I am somewhat apprehensive of his discovering features, which he has so often looked at with pleasure.—And yet I think I may safely trust to my disguise; so much am I altered by it.

Blame me not, Eliza, for putting on this disguise,—for taking a step so apparently unbecoming the delicacy of my sex!—Is it not to promote the happiness of the man I love? and that without the most distant prospect of a return?—Let this consideration quell every punctilious suggestion that may arise, as it does all those of your sincere friend,

HARRIET MAITLAND.

I mean,

SIR HARRY CLOUDESLEY, BART.

L E T-

LETTER LXXIX.

MISS MAITLAND TO MRS. SELWYN.

London, March 20, 1781.

MY DEAR ELIZA,

I Will now proceed with my narrative.—I went early to Mrs. Martinett's, in hopes of being able to obtain the information I wished for; and luckily found her alone.—She received me with great cordiality, having been prepossessed in my favour, not only by the specimen of my liberality she had been witness to, but by the favourable report Mrs. Gascoigne had made, when she introduced me, of the amount of my fortune, and the generosity of my disposition.

Thus impressed, she proceeded, after the necessary prelude of promises of

honour and secrecy on my side, and assurances of every service in her power, on her's, to let me into Mrs. Clayton's character and situation.

She told me, that she was the wife of a country gentleman, who having no taste for play himself, wished to restrain his lady in that point.—Mrs. Clayton, however, she said, found means to come frequently to her house, but had been very unfortunate in a constant run of ill luck, almost from the time of her first introduction.

She then, after fresh injunctions of secrecy, continued to inform me, that through this ill success, Mrs. C— had contracted many debts of honour, from some of which, she had been extricated by the assistance of a nobleman, whose name she did not choose to mention. But the ardour of his lordship's passion being somewhat abated, and finding these demands more frequently made than he thought

thought warrantable, he had of late drawn his purse strings close, and refused her any further supplies.

That in consequence of this, and a continued run of ill luck, she was now more deeply involved than ever.—In particular she owed one person a debt of honour to the amount of three hundred pounds, for the payment of which she was particularly anxious; for if it was not paid in a few days, her imprudence would probably be made known to her husband, which she wished above all things to avoid.

“ You may have observed, Sir,” continued this fashionable go-between, “ that a melancholy clouds her lovely face.—To this cause it is to be attributed. Another nobleman, who guesses at her situation, has offered, through me, to assist her on this emergency; but as you appear to be a good-natured, generous, young gentleman, and in the graces of your
 L 3 “ person

"person better suited to the lady, I
"had rather wish her to receive
"assistance from you, than from his
"lordship."

I told her, I should be extremely
happy in being permitted to relieve the
lady, not only out of this difficulty,
but out of any others she might be in-
volved in, as I no otherwise valued
money, than as it enabled me to shew
my regard for the fair sex.—To this I
added, that I should esteem myself ho-
noured by *her* acceptance of my ac-
knowledgements for any services she
might have it in her power to render
me upon the occasion.

Mrs. Martinett appeared to be so
much pleased at the readiness with
which I entered into her views, that she
promised to procure for me a *tête à*
tête in a few days.—The company now
beginning to drop in, here ended our
conference.

When

When Mrs. Clayton entered, presuming on what had passed during the last evening, I made up to her, and desired to be permitted to be her banker for this night also.—She played, but not with the same success she had done before.—Her losses now exceeded her prior gains.—These I enabled her to pay; and thereby got a step farther into her good graces.—Thus were things situated for that night.—And here will I conclude myself, with the promise of a continuance in a few days, dear Eliza,

Yours sincerely,

HARRIET MAITLAND.

LETTER LXXX.

MR. CLAYTON TO J. N. WINDHAM,
Esq.

London, March 24, 1781.

I Will have the word *Doncaster* expunged from the map of England; and as for *Races*, were I a monarch,

L 4

there

there should not be such an amusement known in my dominions;—the very breed of blood horses should be destroyed;—I would suffer none to be bred but for draft, or the road.

Thou wilt not much wonder at this vehement introduction, when thou shalt read the sequel.—For instead of my prospects clearing up, they grow more gloomy than ever.—My debts amount to a sum I almost tremble to think of; and my doors are scarcely ever free from duns.

Amidst all this, my *worthy* patron, though he cannot avoid knowing my embarrassments, puts not out the tip of his finger to enable me to sustain the load. “He has lately been closeted with the minister upon my account;”—“the weightiest parliamentary interest must be attended to;”—“a good thing, however, will most certainly be vacant in a few weeks, which you may rest assured

assured of."—Thus does his lordship still beguile me with hopes;—but while the grass grows, the steed starves.

And yet, from the hints which I have had given me, I do his lordship great injustice in supposing he does not attend to my concerns.—My pocket, indeed is not the better filled for this attention;—on my brows only are the good effects of it discernable.—But I will not believe the slanderous tale.—It cannot be!—she is not so lost to all sense of shame!

My suspicions, however, being awakened by these insinuations, it behoves me to pay some attention to the conduct of the fair source of all my trouble. Though still infatuated with her charms, and reluctant in the extreme to believe any thing to her disadvantage, it would be a proof of idiotism to remain in a state of ignorance relative to so important a con-

cern, till the finger of scorn points at me.

I have therefore, under the veil of secrecy, imparted my apprehensions to the wife of a friend, who is to inspect privately into her actions.—We find that the chief place of her resort, is Mrs. Martinett's, whose rout she constantly attends, where she plays deep, and loses large sums.

—This same Mrs. Martinett is a woman who lives in a genteel stile, and entertains the best of company ;—but is in fact, no better than an old procuress. To the great circle she appears the woman of fashion ; to a smaller circle she does not disdain to walk in a humbler line.

The person whom I have employed, has obtained, by means of well-timed presents, the confidence of this charitable dame ; and as Mrs. C— is one of her particular associates, I shall be able to acquire,

quire, through this channel, a knowledge of every step she takes.—A handsome young baronet is said, at this time, to be gaining ground in her good graces, Lord G— being somehow or other less assiduous in his attendance upon her than usual.

Good Heavens! is it possible that I can write thus calmly upon such a subject?—I will endeavour to keep my passions under controul as long as I can.—But should the suggestions of my apprehensive heart once be realized, my resentment may prove as impetuous as my love has been.

The account thou sendest me, Jack, of thy being likely to be forced against thy will into the holy state of matrimony would make me smile, if any thing could.—But not even thy liveliest letters could now furnish me with any entertainment. One idea of the blackest dye, tinctures every thought, and

throws a gloom over my mind, which it is not in the power of wine and conviviality to drive away, but for short intervals.

I cannot, however, be so deaf to the calls of friendship, as not to give thee a little advice upon the subject.—If thou really canst be mad enough to entertain thoughts of marrying, after making so making protestations against it;—remember ere it be too late, that the magic sentences which are to bind thee, for ever and aye, to *one*, begins with *dearly beloved*, and ends with *amazement*.

C. CLAYTON.

LETTER

LETTER LXXXI.

MISS MAITLAND TO MRS. SELWYN.

London, April 10, 1781.

DEAR MRS. S.—

AFTER many progressive steps, under the management of the dexterous Mrs. Martinett, the fair object of my pursuit has consented to favour me with a private interview.—Tomorrow evening is the time, and the house of Madam Commode, a French milliner, the place.—Am not I grown a bold fellow in a very short time, think ye, Eliza, thus to venture at a tête à tête with so fine a woman, knowing how things are?

The purity of my intentions emboldens me to run the risk.—Should my assumed character subject me to any claims besides those of friendship, I must

must parry them off as well as I can. It will be in my power, you know, at any time to resume my sex, and make good my retreat.

If I can go on, without discovery, till I am able to reclaim Mrs. Clayton from her propensity to gaming, and to re-establish her fidelity to her husband, I shall have compleated a capital part of my plan.—For this purpose, I have offered to pay off her debts of honour;—as thereby I should think, I shall secure her confidence, and engage her gratitude in my favour.

Should I be so far successful, I will pursue some plan for making Clayton himself easy in his circumstances.—And having done so, I will devise some means or other for prevailing upon them to retire into Yorkshire, there to spend their days, if not in so splendid, yet in a far more comfortable manner.

It

It is a romantic scheme I own; and the steps I am taking may prove unsuccessful.—Be it so;—my intent is to make the man I love happy;—and tho' the consciousness of having done so may be my only reward, by that shall I be sufficiently repaid.—I shall not therefore hesitate to go to Madam Commodore's.—For the result of this same interview you must wait till I write again. In the mean time believe me to be, my dear Eliza,

Yours affectionately,

HARRIET MAITLAND.

LETTER LXXXII.

MR. CLAYTON TO J. N. WINDHAM, Esq.

London, April 11th, 1781.

DEAR WINDHAM,

THOUGH thou hast not answered my last letter, yet as thou art the only person to whom I can unburden my

myself, I will continue to inform thee of every circumstance that arises relative to the subject which engrosses my mind.

My female coadjutor has acted like a very Machiavel.—She has gained intelligence (to make use of a military phrase,) of every movement of the enemy, and has assisted me in taking the proper steps to frustrate their plans.

Here I could execrate till I tire thee;—but I will endeavour to be patient.—Prepare thyself, however, to hear of scars, and wounds, and bloodshed.

A certain lady, who shall be nameless, (curse on the day in which I admitted her to a participation of my name!) is to pass an hour or two, in private, with the handsome young baronet I mentioned in my last.

This discovery I owe to my friend.—She has not only had the address to get out of Mrs. Martinett (through whose
kind

kind assistance the assignation is brought about) the when and the where, but she has further procured for me a snug birth at Madam Commode's, the scene of action, from whence I might behold all that passes.

Won't this be very amusing, Jack? —But as thou know'st thy friend's disposition too well to suppose he will calmly behold what passes,—let thy imagination picture to thee the sequel.

I will write thee, when the deed *is* done, how it *was* done.—Describe their every agony.—If, on the contrary, I should fall, “report me and my cause aright to the unsatisfied,” as Denmark's Prince requested of his friend.

I must here break off.—I dare not trust myself any longer on the subject.—I will not, however, close my letter.

April 12th.
Miracles will never cease, Jack! —
Instead of fears, wounds, and blood-
shed,

shed, which the foregoing part of my letter gave thee reason to expect would be the consequence of my going to Madame Commode's, not a skin has been perforated.—Gentle peace and sweet beneficence have alone resulted from a meeting that seemed to promise nothing but discord.

If thou wast to guess for a fortnight, who the much dreaded rival I went to destroy was, thou wouldst cudgel thy brains to no purpose.—I will therefore, without any farther preamble, tell thee, that the gallant, gay Lothario, alias Sir Harry Cloudesley, was no other than my once beloved Miss Maitland.

That amiable girl, having heard of the difficulties under which I laboured, through the non-performance of Lord G's promises; and likewise of Mrs. Clayton's imprudent attachment to the gaming table, (for the tidings of these things soon find their way into the country,)

try,) she hastened up to town in order to afford us that relief, which a large fortune she has just come to, by the death of a relation in the West Indies, has enabled her to do.

The better to effect this purpose, to which the dear girl acknowledges she was instigated by that true affection she has always borne me, she put on the apparel of a man, and assumed the stile and title of Sir Harry Cloudesley.—Concluding, that through a false pride, I should refuse any offers of assistance coming immediately from herself; and that Mrs. Clayton could not be brought to a sense of her imprudent conduct by any remonstrances from a person who was once her rival;—she thought she could better effect these purposes, by contracting an intimacy with us, in the character of a generous young baronet, who set no other value upon his large

fortune.

fortune than as it enabled him to assist those whom he respected.

But the experiment had like to have cost the supposed Baronet very dear.—

I no sooner saw him enter the place of assignation with my unfaithful wife, than unable to controul my passion, I rushed from my concealment, with my sword drawn, bidding him in the most furious tone, to draw and defend himself.

Mrs. Clayton, terrified by my menaces, and overwhelmed with the consciousness of the impropriety of her being there, gave a shriek, and fell lifeless on a sofa, which happened to be near.

I still continued to call upon the supposed violator of my honour to draw.

—When in an instant I found my rage disarmed by the following exclamation:

“Ah! Clayton; would you kill her
“whom you once loved?”—At the
found

sound of Miss Maitland's well known voice I dropped my sword; and expressing my surprise at seeing her there, and in such a metamorphosis, begged she would explain the cause of it.

She first called my attention to my wife, and with our united endeavours, we brought her to her senses. When she was recovered, I was upon the point of breaking out into reproaches;—but Miss Maitland requested that I would be patient till she had explained the cause of her being there; which would probably tend to exculpate Mrs. Clayton from the suspicions the present appearance of things might subject her to.

This she did nearly in the following words: “After so long an intimacy; “and the expectations I had reason to “indulge, I think I may venture to “tell you, Mr. Clayton, without incurring censure, that your welfare is “as dear to me as my own.—To pro-

—I dropped my sword, and begged she would explain the cause of it.

“mote your interest, and for that alone,
“have I taken upon me this habit, and
“assumed the fictitious title I bear.—
“And I was in hopes that the precau-
“tions I have made use of in disguising
“myself, and by speaking in a feigned
“voice, I should have escaped discovery
“till I had effected my purpose.

“But the terror excited by your un-
“expected appearance, and attack, has
“thrown me off my guard, and I have
“betrayed my secret, before I could a-
“vail myself of it.

“My design in obtaining from Mrs.
“Clayton the promise of this assignation,
“I think I need not tell you, on my
“part was perfectly innocent.—I
“had heard that her debts of ho-
“nour amounted to a considerable
“sum; and as these might at length
“have come to your knowledge, and
“have given you great uneasiness, and
“the prevention of that was consequent-
“ly essential to your happiness, I re-
“solved,

"solved, if possible, to get an account
 "of them from her own lips, and, with
 "a romantic spirit of generosity, which
 "seemed annexed to my new character,
 "to prevail upon her to permit me to
 "enable her to pay them. -- Having
 "done this, I intended to have pursu-
 "ed somewhat of a similar plan to extri-
 "cate you also from your pecuniary en-
 "gagements. And though the disco-
 "very which has now taken place, has
 "frustrated the means, it will not, I
 "hope prevent the accomplishment of
 "my design.

"With regard to our present meeting,
 "I must do your lady the justice to say,
 "that I believe, I am more indebted for
 "it to the ascendancy her entanglements
 "have given Mrs. Martinett over her,
 "than to the depravity of her own mind.
 "When a woman is infatuated enough
 "to give herself up to that most destruc-
 "tive of vices, gaming, she knows not
 "into

"into what difficulties it may lead
 "her. but, and now, I must needs do."

"Forgive therefore, my dear Clayton,
 "(for so I must still call you,) this ap-
 "parent deviation from her duty; and
 "let us think of nothing now, but how
 "to repair all our imprudences. Go with
 "me into Yorkshire, where it shall be
 "the whole study of my life, to make
 "you both as happy as possible."

"By applying the fortune that Heaven
 "has unexpectedly blessed me with, to
 "this use, can I alone enjoy it; for it
 "is my determination to descend to the
 "grave in my present single state."

Then turning to Mrs. Clayton, on
 whose lovely countenance anxious sus-
 pence seemed to be imprinted, said,
 "Be not jealous, my dear Madam, at
 "this declaration of the continuance of
 "my regard for your husband: It can
 "never, with reason, disturb your peace;
 "for

"for be assured that it is as pure and
 "disinterested as that of an angel."

Not to dwell any longer on minute circumstances, my time being now too much employed to admit of it; suffice it to say, that the dear girl made use of so many affectionate and persuasive arguments to induce us to consent to her wishes, that we found ourselves obliged to give up every punctilious objection, and to consent to her generous proposals.

I am consequently putting my affairs in a proper train for leaving London, which I am enabled to do by the assistance of Harriet's banker, on whom she has given me a credit equal to all my demands. And I assure thee, Jack, I shall leave this place with much greater pleasure than I came to it. For during the short time I have been here, what from the vexations arising from the breach of courtiers' promises;—a too

expensive stile of living;—and a wife contaminated with the follies and vices of the great;—I have known nothing but disquietude.

I know not another person in the world, except thyself, Windham, to whom I could submit to lay under such obligations. But as I am well assured the beneficence of the generous girl originates from the purest motives, and that I should rob her of exquisite pleasure, by refusing her favours, I have suffered complacence to triumph over punctilio.

Oh Jack, what a pearl did I throw away when I rejected the long-tried affection of my Harriet!—Now it is too late, I am sensible of my loss.—I have learned from experience, that beauty alone is lighter than a feather, when weighed in the balance against such sterling virtues and accomplishments as those possessed by Harriet Maitland.

I must

I must add, that my kind benefactress likewise found means, if not to eradicate, at least to moderate my displeasure against my wife.—Her arguments, aided by Bella's charms, which have not lost the whole of their power over me, have induced me to indulge the pleasing hope that by retiring from the scene of temptation, we may yet be in some degree happy:

It would be only wasting time to bestow on the noble author of these misadventures the curses he deserves.—I shall therefore only say, that I hold him and all his dishonourable fraternity in the utmost contempt.—And I hope, Jack, my example will be a memento to thee, if needful, that there is little trust to be placed in the promises of courtiers, except when their own interest is promoted by the fulfilment of them.

M 2 to 1000000 As

As we purpose taking our departure for the country in about a fortnight, you will direct your future letters for me there, and believe me ever to be

Thine sincerely,

C. CLAYTON.

LETTER LXXIII.

MISS MAITLAND TO MRS. SELWYN.

London, April 13, 1781.

MY DEAR ELIZA,

THE purpose of my journey has been brought about in a much more expeditious manner than I could have expected. — Accident has done more for me than the best-laid schemes could have effected.

I informed you in my last, that through the mediation of Mrs. Martinett, I was

to

to have a private interview with Mrs. Clayton. My design being, as I have already said, first to assist, then to endeavour to reclaim.

She was punctual to her appointment; and I led her into the drawing room, affecting such airs of gallantry as were due to so fine a woman.—When lo, and behold, before we had seated ourselves, another door opened, and who should enter, but Clayton, with a drawn sword in his hand, demanding satisfaction for the injury I was about to offer to his honour.

Mrs. Clayton fainted.—As for myself, the surprize so far overwhelmed me, that in my trepidation I forgot the precaution I had hitherto taken of speaking in a feigned voice, and was soon known by him.—He dropped his sword. An ecclairecissement ensued, and after much solicitation, managed with no little ad-

dress, I was permitted to carry my plan into execution.

I have already removed the pecuniary incumbrances of both, and they have consented to return with me into Yorkshire, as soon as the necessary arrangements can be made.—Till then, my dear Eliza, I will defer giving you the minutiae of the transactions referred to.

How shall I describe to you, the confusion of Mrs. Clayton at being discovered by her husband with a gay young fellow!—Here, had I given way to the suggestions of vanity, I could have triumphed in my turn.—Instead of this, I endeavoured to exculpate her from the apparent guilt.

Taking advantage of Clayton's surprise at seeing Sir Harry Cloudesley converted into a female; and of the satisfaction he afterwards felt at the prospect of being relieved from his present incumbrances; I imputed her error to
the

the art and devices of that adept in seduction, Mrs. Martinett, and prevailed upon him to consider it as an equivocal, and unaccomplished offence.

As Clayton does not appear to entertain any suspicions of a similar intimacy between her and Lord G. I the more readily procured her pardon.— And I now anticipate the extreme pleasure of being able to make the man I love happy, in all respects.—To give him constant proofs of this, without incurring a censorious reflection, or exciting in my rival's bosom a jealous apprehension, will constitute my greatest happiness. Determined as I am to lead a single life, I have chalked out a plan, which I intend to pursue, when I return into the country.

In about ten days or a fortnight, I hope to pay my respects to you in person; till when,

I remain, dear Eliza,

Your ever affectionate friend,

M 4 H. MAITLAND.

LETTER LXXXIV.

MRS. CLAYTON, JUN. TO MISS LASCELLES.

Woodland Cot, May, 2, 1781.*

RETURNED like a bad penny, here I am, my dear Anna, once more in Yorkshire.—Vulgar as the foregoing phrase is, I do not know, *entré nous*, that I could have hit upon one more applicable to the situation both of mind and body, in which I am come back.

With a mind full of vexation.—For (I say it to you, and to you only would I say it) it is not with the satisfaction I seem to express, that I am returned.—Nor, you may be assured, does it lessen

As the insertion of *the whole* of the letters, after this date, would make the work too prolix, such only have been selected by the editor as immediately tend to forward the conclusion of the history.

GRATIAN M. H. this

this reluctance to consider, that it is at the request, and through the beneficence of a more opulent rival, that we have taken the step. However, as my conduct was not, I own, altogether so prudent, during my being in London, as perhaps it should have been;—and my reputation, notwithstanding Clayton is silent upon it, is not quite so unsullied, as when I entered the metropolis; I am obliged to make a virtue of necessity, and to submit, with as good a grace as possible.

My health also, Anna, is not in the least improved, by the many anxious moments I have passed;—by the continual racketting I was engaged in;—or by the fashionable hours I have been obliged to keep.—The sanguine flush of the rose, on my cheeks, which used to excite the praises of all my admirers, has given place to the more palid hue of the lilly.—I am much fallen away;—

and, to crown the whole, I have a hectic cough upon me, which, if it does not yield to the clearer air of Yorkshire, must be attended with consequences I would wish to defer for some years.

So that upon the whole, our return into the country, though undertaken with a secret reluctance on my part, may prove a judicious step.—And I dare say, your next letter will show that you are of the same opinion.—However, as I have already bespoke your lenity, do not be too severe upon my imprudences; but, as you promised at the conclusion of your last, send me all the consolation and comfort in your power.

Nothing now remains for me to do, if I recover my health, but, forgetting all the gay scenes of dear, dear London, to endeavour to make, not only a good wife, but a good *housewife*. To enter into the latter department in all its branches: such as making pastry, pickles, preserves,

preserves, &c. &c. and moreover, spreading plaisters, preparing diet-drinks, and contriving bandages, for all the maimed, the lame, the blind, and the halt, in the neighbourhood. — So that, when I depart this life, the poor may cry me up for one of the gooddest, and most notablest ladies in the county.

Or suppose, Anna, as we are returned at a season so *apropos*, — when May is in her prime, that I was to purchase a flock of sheep, and turn shepherdess? — How prettily would I decorate my crook! — With what taste would I adjust the flowers in my hair! — How smart should be the cock of my hat! — And how nouvelle the shape of my jacket.

This would be an *innocent* amusement at least. — I have a Corydon, you know, ready made to my hands. — Aye, but a Thyrsis, a Damon, or a Menalcas, may now and then be lurking behind a haw-

thorn hedge, to take advantage of the loneliness of the place, and of a heart attuned to love, by the vernal breeze, the fragrance of the flowers, and the warbling of the birds.—This indeed might render the employment not altogether so *innocent* as it is reputed to be.

So I e'en leave to you, my Anna, the choice of the employment by which I shall pass the tedious hours away, in the dull country. —Corresponding with you will constitute my most agreeable amusement ; but that will take up only a part of the time ; therefore recommend me to some other, in order to employ the remainder.

Notwithstanding this flash of merriment, all is not well within, my dear friend. — The disappointment of my gay hopes ;—submission to the will of a husband, from a consciousness of having made but an ill return for his preferring me to another ;—and the reflection of
lying

lying under obligations to a woman whom I cannot esteem;—all these considerations rob me of my peace of mind and wonted cheerfulness. I sigh, without knowing that I do so;—which adds to my malady.

But let me not indulge this melancholy stile.—I have got into it before I was aware.—My next shall be cheerfuller.—Till then I will bid my dear Anna adieu.—

ARABELLA CLAYTON.

LETTER LXXXV.

MISS MAITLAND TO MRS. SELWYN.

Belle Farm, Sept. 8th, 1781.

DEAR ELIZA,

FIVE months are now elapsed since my return from London, and I find myself no less satisfied with adhering to the resolutions

resolutions I at that time laid down, than I did while there was novelty to give a relish to them.

But as there is a constant fluctuation in all the affairs of this life, (a remark that I believe both of us have more than once made, during our correspondence) I fear the re-establishment of Clayton's peace of mind will not be so lasting as I wished it to be.

He will not, I think, long be able to retain in his possession what once constituted his chief happiness. — Mrs. Clayton has nearly reached the last stage of a consumption. — Like an early flower, she has bloomed her short day, and will soon, in all probability, be cut down by the inexorable scythe of the king of terrors. — The foundation of her decay appears to have been laid during her residence in London; and ere many weeks are passed, — perhaps not *many* — Clayton will be a widower.

Do

Do me not the injustice to think, Eliza, that I mention this with any degree of pleasure, or look forward to the event with any selfish expectations. My love for Clayton has long been mellowed into esteem and friendship, without the intervention of a warmer idea; and I can appeal to Heaven, that my views in my attention to his interest have been perfectly disinterested.

It is true, I have refused several offers of marriage, some of which were far from objectionable; but it has not been from any expectations of what is likely to happen.—Indeed, it has not, Eliza!—I sincerely lament the approach of what must give him so much pain.—But lest I say too much on the subject, I will drop it.

I think, Eliza, you never had an opportunity of seeing Mr. Windham, Clayton's confidential friend.—You are

not, however, I believe, unacquainted with his character.

This professed libertine,—this rover, who could not bear the idea of being tied to *one* woman,—or if he did, it must be to one who was all perfection, young, beautiful, accomplished, rich, &c. is at length married.—The person whom he has chosen, and that I suppose, because he thought she had all these qualities concentrated in her, is Lady Wilhelmina Grant, sister to the Earl of ——. They were married in Scotland, of which kingdom the lady is a native; and having taken Woodland Cot in their way to London, did me the honour of a visit.

But how surprised was I, when this nonpareil entered the room!—I have heard it remarked, that these very difficult gentlemen are not always so happy in the choice of their wives, as they *prate* they will be.—They do not always

ways meet with the fancy-formed angels they believe to be sent down from heaven on purpose for them.—But that a man should so far forget the lovely idea impressed on his mind, as to unite himself to one the very reverse in all respects, is wonderful indeed.

This, however, has been the case with Clayton's friend. Instead of being young, Lady Wilhelmina is at least forty;—instead of being beautiful, there is not a trace of beauty about her.—Her form is masculine;—her hair red;—the features of her face irregular and full of freckles;—nor is it *very frequently*, I believe, that it is adorned with smiles.—She speaks in the broad Scotch accent, and seems not to be wanting in the reputed national pride of that people.—To add one item more, this lord of the creation, with all his boasted knowledge of the world, and of the weaker sex, does not appear to retain
that

that domestic authority, which, as a lord of the creation, he ought to do.

Think not, Eliza, that the foregoing portrait is too highly coloured; I assure you it is not.—Such, or nearly such, is the newly married lady of Mr. Windham;—and such be the wives of all those very conceited gentlemen, who, before marriage, fancy they know better how to chuse a wife than their neighbours, should they ever *deign* to take one.

—To conclude with a subject which is at present most interesting to me, because it is most interesting to Clayton.

I will send you word when the fatal blow is struck.—And as then, perhaps, however little I may think of or expect them, circumstances may arise which will require advice, I shall fly, as usual, to my dear Eliza for it.—In the word *Eliza* you know I always comprehend that of Henry; for since the day that Eve was taken out of the side of Adam,
there

there surely never was a couple whose hearts and minds were so interwoven with each other.

Adieu,

H. MAITLAND.

LETTER LXXXVI.

MR. CLAYTON TO J. N. WINDHAM,
Esq.

Woodland Cot, Jan. 6, 1782.

WITH the absence of the object, my dear Windham, the delusion is likewise gone.—In my Bella's grave lies buried my imprudence.—I have dropped a tear to her memory, and now cannot help giving way to those brighter prospects, a young widower has a right, at my time of life, to indulge.

Love, or another monosyllable of nearly the same sound and signification, gives way to a passion nearer allied to reason.

reason. Love, but of a purer kind, tempered by esteem, and directed by prudence, is lighted up once more in my bosom.

But how shall I communicate this revival to her by whom it is caused, and to whom it is directed?—How shall I ever hope to obtain forgiveness for an infidelity so unprovoked, and so unwarrantable?—Shall I ever dare again to utter the transporting words, *my Harriet Maitland*?—Oh, no, no, no!—Despair must be my portion, and deservedly so.—That alone is wanting to compleat the punishment of a crime, which undoubtedly claims a punishment.

I sometimes flatter myself that the benignity with which she relieved my distresses, and her subsequent endeavours to make my situation as happy as it would admit of, strongly favours of a continuance of that affection I once was blessed with.—With that idea only, would

would I have accepted of them.—Does she not indeed, avow that her regard for me is unabated, and glory in the acknowledgement?—She does.—Why then should I raise up doubts and difficulties?—I will make the attempt, however.—“Faint heart,” thou know’st.

I have now been upwards of three months a single man.—Art thou casuist enough in these things, Jack, to tell me, whether respect to the memory of a deceased wife, requires that the renewal of a prior suit should be postponed so long as the commencement of a fresh one;—I should think not.—The most rigid etiquette, I should imagine, would allow of the former at the expiration of three months, and of blanching one’s sables into bridal vestments in six.

You see, Jack, I have settled the time, in an instant.—But as the approbation and concurrence of another is much more material, and might be far

far more difficult to be obtained, do I not, thinkest thou, deserve to be ranked with the *wise* fellows, who quarrelled about felling the bear's skin before they had taken the bear?—Most certainly I do.—

I will not, however, remain much longer in my present state of anxiety.—If supplications the most submissive, and protestations urged with all the warmth of the sincerest love, will avail, I shall soon regain the treasure, I had not the wisdom to possess myself of when it was within my reach:—

I shall let thee pass in this letter, with only one spar of raillery on the marriage of so determined a libertine.—*Dotage* must have crept upon thee very silently, Jack!—But more of this hereafter.—My impatience to be blessed with the renewed smiles of her, whom I have always beheld with an esteem easily in-
flamed

flamed into love, will only permit me
to add, that I am

Thine sincerely,

C. CLAYTON.

LETTER LXXXVII.

MRS. SELWYN TO MISS MAITLAND.

Jan. 12th, 1782.

YOUR situation, my dear Harriet, is
as delicate and as needful of ad-
vice, as it has been at any time since
you entered into your teens.—You tell
me that Clayton has renewed the suit he
so imprudently broke off.—You describe
his solicitude and his penitence;—and
you own that you are not unmoved by
them.

But you ask, at the same time, whether
after such a public insult, it will not
appear like meanness and forwardness
in the eyes of the world to accept a hand
which

which had been so rudely and abruptly withdrawn, when yours was held out to receive it?

There is, I acknowledge, some appearance of this;—and your acquaintance at large may view your acceptance of Clayton in that light.—But *their* ideas of the matter, do not in my opinion, carry sufficient weight with them to serve for the regulation of your conduct.

—It is a rule with me, before I pay any regard to the sentiments of the public, which are oftener guided by caprice than by justice, to weigh well the consequences of an action;—to consider how it will affect myself and others;—and if it then appears to bear the test of reason and propriety, I care little about what the world says of it.

Your attachment to Clayton has been of long standing.—Your friends approved, and the world spoke well of it.—

Just

Just as you were upon the point of entering the pale of matrimony, a damsel of the most attractive appearance happened to catch his eye. He seized her unreluctant hand.— They rudely pushed by you ; and making their way into the sacred boundary, there revelled for a time, till they found themselves among briars and brambles.— After being well scratched and torn, and heartily sick of the frolick, the wanderer's reason is returned, and he is desirous of re-entering the inclosure, on a more sedate and rational plan, with you. And as he seems to be convinced that it would have been better for him if he had not thus wandered in search of a delusive happiness, it is probable that he will be less inclined to rove again than if he had never suffered for his pranks.

To be serious—I have always entertained the idea that Clayton's behaviour to you, was only the effect of a

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temporary delusion; and that he erred against his better judgment.—This being the case, it is the advice both of my dear Henry and myself, that if any punctilio still lurks in your breast, you should pluck it up, and cast it from you.

You have acted, during the whole transaction, with a magnanimity, generosity, and constancy, that does honour to your sex.—And the re-offered love of the only man you ever could be happy with, is the only reward it seems to be in the power of fortune to bestow upon you.

Accept it therefore, my dear Harriet, and may you find the sentiments of Clayton as exalted as your own.—As I doubt not, but he is before this time convinced that it is not in the power of *beauty alone* to confer lasting and rational happiness, he will know how to value it, when rendered more lovely by virtue and every valuable adornment. My
concluding

concluding wish is, that the picture of true love, I formerly drew for you, at your request, may prove an useful model to both of you, and be realised in your union.—I shall wait the bridal summons with impatience; till when I remain

Sincerely yours,

ELIZA SELWYN.

LETTER LXXXVIII.

MR. WINDHAM TO CHARLES CLAYTON,
ESQUIRE.

London, Feb. 5, 1782.

DEAR CHARLES,

IT is with pleasure I hear that thou hast recovered the path from which you strayed, in pursuit of an ignis fatuus, and that you only wait for the expiration of the time prescribed by decency, to be united to the amiable Miss Maitland.

N 2

I must

I must say, Charles, that the lady shews great benignity upon the occasion; and forgives, where it requires an uncommon exertion of complacency and good-nature to forgive. — Indeed, throughout the whole of thy deviation, she has given such proofs of a disinterested and unalterable regard for thee, that thou must be the most ungrateful of villains, if thou dost not make her a reciprocal return of truth and affection. Had I been Miss Maitland, before thou shouldst have obtained my consent, I would have enjoined thee some kind of penance, and that a pretty severe one.

Now I talk of penance, let me ask thee, Charles, whether that same matrimony, is not in itself a penance? — It certainly is, or I am worse off than my neighbours. — I am sorry to say it, — and to thee only would I say it; — but the sole reflection I can find to compensate for the loss of liberty, is the mighty honour

honour of having a Scots Earl for a brother-in-law.

What the devil could possess me to run my head, thus blindfold, into the matrimonial noose; and that, after the numberless protestations I have made against it!—When I was revelling with the sprightly *Bona Robas* in Italy, or the enchanting Circassian girls on the delightful banks of the Nile, had any one told me that I should ere long have confined my roving heart to *one*, and that one so unlike; I should have treated the augur with the contempt Cæsar did.

By my soul, Charles, I can scarcely believe myself the same man.—Once, considering the possession of beauty as the great good; now forced to believe, by the hourly lessons I receive on the subject, that riches, wit, beauty, are all comprized in the words *high birth*. In short, I find that I have bartered my

M 3

freedom,

freedom, and every enjoyment, for the honour of being allied to nobility.

Such, Charles, has been the consequence of my hoodwinked expedition to the land of matrimony.—May that which thou art about to undertake, be happier.—While I lament my fate, and live on the reflection of past pleasures, mayst thou experience that solid happiness which an union with the amiable Miss Maitland seems to promise.—For if any thing can render the marriage state *tolerable*, it must be where good-sense, fortune, beauty, and every accomplishment, are united.

J. N. WINDHAM.

P. S. I have just received information that thy deceitful old patron Lord G. lies at the point of death, without *one* friend to close his eyes.

LETTER

LETTER LXXXIX.

MR. CLAYTON TO J. N. WINDHAM,
Esq.

Woodland Cot, April 10, 1782.

MY DEAR WINDHAM,

THE concluding friendly wish of thy last letter has been propitious, and I am as happy as the possession of the most amiable of women can make me. Hymen has lighted his torch once more for me, not indeed with that fierce and glaring flame he did before, which blazed violently awhile, and then decayed; but with a gentle lambent fire, that diffuses a cordial warmth, and promises to be inextinguishable.—In short, Jack, I am the husband of Harriet Maitland. Thursday last, be it ever marked with white, put an end to my anxiety, and conferred on me that greatest of all blessings,

blessings, a lovely, prudent, virtuous wife.

New prospects now arise before my mind's eye; which, as my ideas are yet in too tumultuous a state, from the extreme of happiness I have unexpectedly attained, to describe to thee with perspicuity, I shall do in the sweet and expressive words wherewith Thomson paints the felicity of those, "whom gentlest stars unite, and in one fate, their hearts, their fortunes, and their beings blend."

What is the world to them,

Its pomp, its pleasure, and its nonsense all!

Who in each other clasp whatever fair

High fancy forms, and lavish hearts can wish;

Something than beauty dearer, should they look

Or on the mind, or mind-illumin'd face;

True goodness, honour, harmony and love,

The richest bounty of indulgent heaven.

Mean-time a smiling offspring rises round,

And mingles both their graces.

Oh speak the joy! ye, whom the sudden tear

Surprises

Surprises often, while you look around,
 And nothing strikes your eye but sights of bliss,
 All various nature pressing on the heart :
 An elegant sufficiency, content,
 Retirement, rural quiet, friendship, books,
 Ease and alternate labour, useful life,
 Progressive virtue, and approving Heaven.
 These are the matchless joys of virtuous love ;
 And thus their moments fly. The seasons thus,
 As ceaseless round a jarring world they roll,
 Still find them happy ; and consenting Spring
 Sheds her own rosy garland on their heads :
 Till evening comes at last, serene and mild ;
 When after the long vernal day of life,
 Enamour'd more, as more remembrance swells
 With many a proof of recollected love,
 Together down they sink in social sleep,
 Together freed, their gentle spirits fly
 To scenes where love and bliss immortal reign.

Congenial to these, are the hopes and
 wishes excited in my bosom by the dawn
 of happiness newly lighted up in it. Think
 not, Jack, that I mean to tantalize thee
 with the descriptive extract.—The time
 may come, when you may as unexpect-
 edly

edly be able to realize it, as, I flatter myself I have the prospect of doing.— That thou can't not, at present, share with me in it, is, I assure thee, an abatement to my happiness.

Thy expectations have been disappointed; which I believe is generally the case when they are raised too high. Moderate thy ideas on this head, and they may on some future day be gratified, as mine have been.—In the mean time, as domestic pleasures seem not to be thy portion, seek for them in public life.—Thy own good sense will point out the line, and if it be in my power, by any means, to aid thee in it, freely command

Thy ever affectionate friend,

C. CLAYTON.

P. S. Had not Lady Wilhelmina, when here, shown a great disinclination
to

to either your or her leaving London, till after the birth day, I need not say that an invitation would have been sent, and that your company on the happy day would have made no small addition to our pleasure.—If thou can'st convey our respectful compliments to her Ladyship, without betraying any part of my correspondence with thee that may affect thy peace, pray do.

So little resentment do I entertain for Lord G. notwithstanding the extreme ill treatment I have received from him, that I shall henceforward only consider him as the instrument of bringing about the happy reverse I now enjoy, and say, with the truest sincerity, *Requiescat in pace.*

F I N I S.

to the point of looking for the
after the first day I need not be
on my feet, but I have been
that you company on the day
and that the first of the day
one of them. — It then can't convey out
respectful consideration to her I believe
I have been in the part of my life
and I have been in the part of my life



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